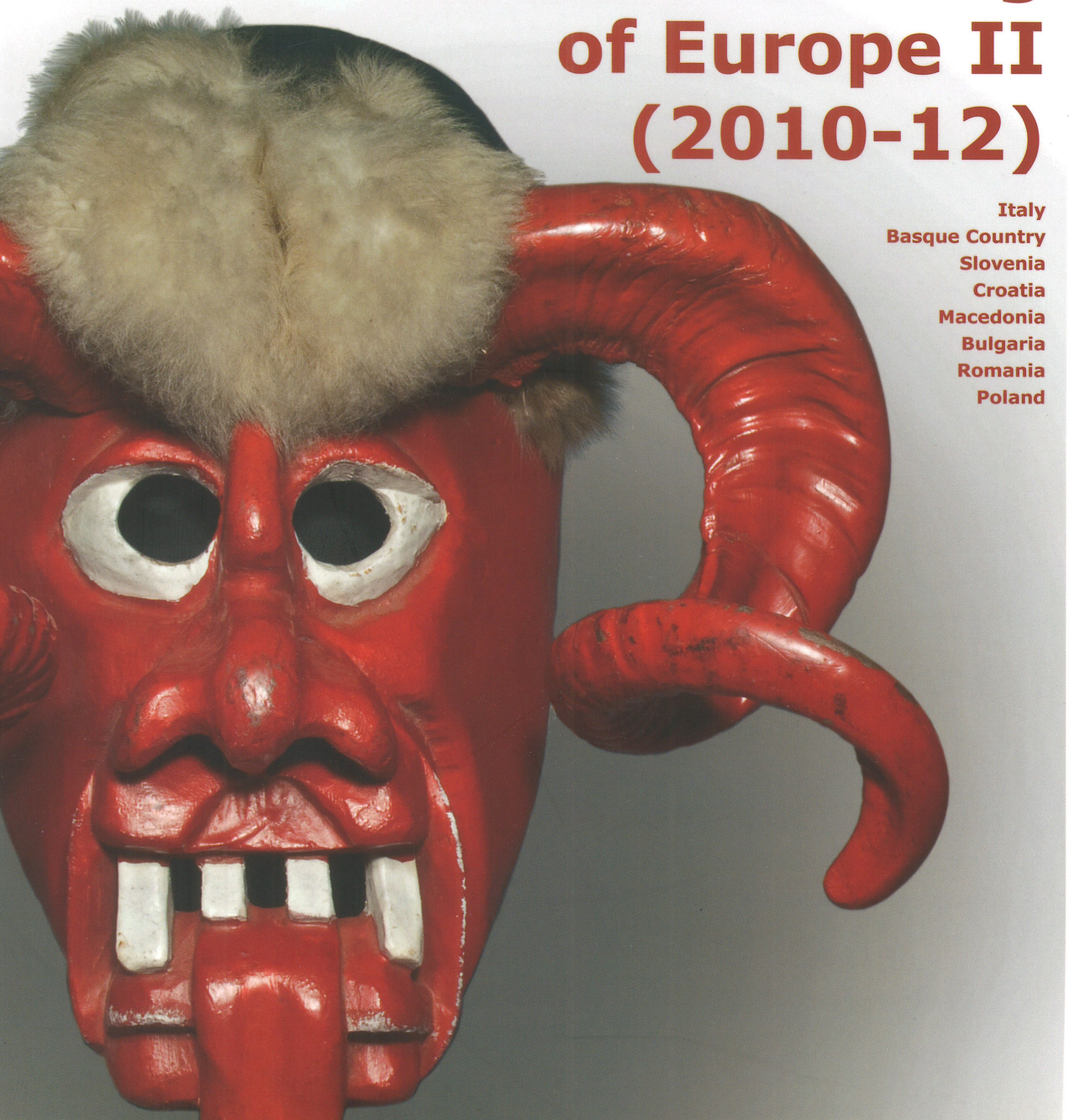
Carnival King of Europe II (2010-12)



Italy
Basque Country
Slovenia
Croatia
Macedonia
Bulgaria
Romania
Poland

www.carnivalkingofeurope.it

Carnival King of Europe II (2010-12)

Carnival King of Europe II (2010-2012)
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Carnival King of Europe II (2010-12)

Edited by Antonella Mott

***Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina* (organizer)**
San Michele all'Adige – Italy

Euskal Museoa. Bilbao. Museo Vasco
Bilbao – Basque Country, Spain

Slovenski etnografski muzej
Ljubljana – Slovenia

Etnografski Muzej, Zagreb
Zagreb – Croatia

Nacionalna Ustanova Muzej na Makedonija
Skopje – Macedonia

The National Ethnographic Museum
Sofia – Bulgaria

Complexul Naţional Muzeal 'Astra'
Sibiu – Romania

Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne w Warszawie
Warsaw – Poland

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Lachè, *Romeno, Italy*
(photo by A. Mott)

Giovanni Kezich

Introduction

The term 'Carnival' refers today to a whole galaxy of often very diverse ritual events which still emerge at the end of winter and involve a large number of European individuals and communities. Yet if we delve just beneath the surface, there appears to be some striking similarities of themes, characters and situations in European carnivals, so that mummers girdled by cowbells; harlequins wearing high conical caps; a mock nuptial cortege etc., are found in surprisingly similar forms from the Southern Balkans to Iberia, and from Central Europe to the Italian peninsula. Such similarities are found all the more clearly when we move away from the towns and into the world of European villages, where winter masquerades still bear some direct affinity to those ancient rituals from a distant age which fostered the onset of the new agrarian year. In this sense, Carnival reflects elements of the original agrarian core of European culture, and is still a very powerful and captivating symbol, one in which Europeans can still mirror and identify themselves.

From 2007 to 2009, *Carnival King of Europe*, a project involving a network of ethnographic museums from Italy, France, Croatia, Bulgaria and Macedonia, successfully gathered a considerable amount of evidence on the structural similarities of Carnivals throughout Europe. Fieldwork was carried out in five countries, a film was made (*Carnival King of Europe* by Giovanni Kezich and Michele Trentini, DVD, 22'), an internet site (www.carnivalkingofeurope.it) was launched, and a rich and lively itinerant exhibition was brought from San Michele all'Adige in the Italian Trentino to Zagreb, Sofia and Skopje. *Carnival King of Europe II* (2010-12) aims at extending the project along the same lines to four new countries (Basque Country - Spain, Poland, Slovenia and Romania), each represented by an important ethnographic museum, as a further step towards a survey and a general reappraisal of Carnival culture in the whole of Europe.

Carnival King of Europe: the concepts[1]

Quite remote from the flamboyant Carnival pageants that take place in a great number of cities, heralded of course by Venice, Nice, Köln, Cadiz, etc., European village Carnivals are often still rather private local events, that involve the tightly closed sector of the long-standing resident hardliners in what is often tantamount to a rather ragged mumming tour of the village area, stopping at every household begging for foodstuffs and wine in exchange for good wishes: often, at least prior to recent revival times, a kind of minor tongue-in-cheek self-styled folklore event, finished off in the space of one afternoon without further ado. Still, in this context, a few strange masked characters make their appearance, impressive, even in the most shabby of circumstances, for the exotic, oriental or be it mock-military

[1] This text is freely drawn from G. Kezich *'Carnival King of Europe'. Towards a new interpretation of European winter masquerades*, Paper presented at 'Re-Thinking Ethnology'. A working conference sponsored by the Journal of Material Culture Department of Anthropology & The Centre for Museums, Heritage and Material Culture at University College London, London (UK) 5th-6th June 2009; then published in M. Hoppal (ed.) *Sustainable Heritage*, Symposium on European Intangible Cultural Heritage, Budapest, 22nd-24th April, 2010. European Folklore Institute, Budapest, 2010, pp. 162-171; and *Etnografia Nowa* 3/2011, Warsawa, pp. 244-251.

nature of their attire, the sheer hieratical elegance of their bearing and the specific names that belong to them, which seem to be drawn, even across wide distances, from the same basic glossary of unheard-of-words with half-forgotten meanings.

In fact, if on the narrow local scale the gamut of variability of winter masquerading can be bafflingly wide, on a larger continental scale, some amazing connections and similarities can be noted across very long distances, not only in the general pace of these events, which can be generally described as the staging of quite frightening invasions of strange creatures that go round the village asking for alms in exchange for blessings, but much more specifically in the shape and costume of these creatures, which seem to fit not many more than half-a-dozen stereotypical characters, in the specific actions which they perform, and, most importantly, in the general structure of the drama in which such characters and actions are made to fit: a structure which is found almost ubiquitously all over Europe and to which we now turn. This can be conveniently, and almost unmistakably divided into three completely separate acts, plus an epilogue.

The **first act** is usually staged as the imaginary invasion of the village by a troupe of wayward supernatural figures, fully masked, who purport to come from the wilderness, from the 'dark of the wood', from 'beyond the Ocean', from the 'valley of the Ogre', etc. According to local traditions, these characters can in turn be conceptualized as an assorted herd of wild animals, a flock of goats or sheep, a band of devils, but also as the returning dead or ancestors, dubbed as the 'old ones' and seen as a marauding bunch of old vagrants...

Almost invariably these figures wear a waist-piece of clanging bells, and leap upwards in order to make the most noise possible to summon the villagers to a kind of awakening: the same awakening which nature imposes on the seeds that must start to sprout. Once the frightening has been done and their bells have been made to sound as loudly as possible, the group may settle to its second important task, which is that of going round the homes asking for alms.

The **second act** contains the core of the ceremony, which can be witnessed with the very same characters that featured in the first act or, sometimes, by entirely new ones. In this second case, these new characters tend to be *unmasked* since they represent priestly, i.e. hieratical rather than supernatural figures, which are therefore, as true priests would be, serious, not clownish or jocular characters. A pointed mitre, i.e. a conical cap, usually white and adorned with ribbons, is the most specific feature of these new characters, often dubbed as 'harlequins' in the Alps, who tend to form a ring, i.e. to define a sacred circle where the ceremony proper takes place.

This ceremony usually entails a nuptial cortege followed by a mock wedding, often combined with the driving of a real plough onto the scene and the ritual ploughing of the village square, which is often the pivotal moment of the whole ritual pantomime, and is found in an incredibly wide range of circumstances, from the *kukeri* of Thrace on the shores of the Black Sea, to Macedonia, to Southern Italy, the Alps and Sardinia ending up as far away as England, where the 'plough boys', 'bullock lads' and 'plough jacks' were, and perhaps still are, necessary complements to the performance of the sword dance.

Once this ceremony is over, a **third act** ensues, which is however completely different in pace. All of a sudden the stage is taken by a marauding crowd of caricature peasant villagers, mockable for their unsavoury senility, infectious poverty, incurable drunkenness, gluttony and lechery. These are followed by a cortege of tramps and thugs, satirical figures of doctors and nurses, zombies and drag queens in a crescendo of increasingly overt sexual and scatological obscenities, openly directed against the onlookers, who are also physically smeared with charcoal sap, rotten meat, cow dung and other such niceties.

This is usually but a brief, if wild, interlude, which is soon put to an end. In the **epilogue**, one leading character, a straw dummy, a wandering harlequin or a man in a bear costume is captured, chained, put on trial, shaved, con-

demned to death, cut to pieces, hung high upon a pole, drowned or burnt so as to make sure that Carnival is properly over.

That the workings of this ritual can be found in shards and splinters, but arranged in this very same threefold sequenced order across a European area that goes from the Black Sea to the Atlantic, and from Apulia to Northumbria, certainly says something about the fundamentals of European culture, and has its own 'ethnological' significance at a much deeper level than that upon which discontinuities and discrepancies of the 'ethnological' kind, i.e. 'ethnicities' or 'ethnic identities' with their own specific signals and markers, are usually recognized.

Entirely steeped in a very ancient esoteric doctrine about what is to be agriculturalists, on how to perform yearly magic for the renewal of the contract that links local communities to the spirits of place, Carnival also impersonates that old recurrent theme of European history, that of the frailty of kingship, and may well be taken to be, ephemeral and ubiquitous as it is, and at least as far as ethnology is concerned, a real 'King of Europe'.

In order to tackle the gamut of questions posed by such a scenario, a European project is to be launched in 2010 as a way of establishing some effective communication between ethnographic museums which may have gathered in the course of their existence, documents, data, expertise, photos and films on the topic of Carnivals and/or winter masquerades.

The project, led by the *Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina* of San Michele all'Adige near Trento (Italy), which is a large regional institution of the Italian alpine North-East, has been joined by national ethnographic museum institutions of Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Basque Country, Spain.

The project directly inherits the experience of an earlier project involving five countries (Italy, Bulgaria, Croatia, France and Macedonia), which led to some seminars and conferences, an itinerant exhibition that travelled from San Michele all'Adige to Zagreb, Sofia, and Skopje, a film, and a rich website www.carnivalkingofeurope.it

Aims

The aims of the project are threefold:

1. providing, through (i) museum research, (ii) fieldwork on location and (iii) cinematic documentation, new bases for an overall interpretation of European winter fertility rituals in the general framework of European culture history. In particular, the early, yet still unchallenged suggestions by Sir James Frazer[2] will be compared with more recent materials.
2. establishing a working network between some major European ethnographic Museums, in order to exchange information and activities. This has been already attempted in the past, yet *Carnival King of Europe* places before the institutions involved a *common theme* to work on;
3. contributing to a growing awareness as to the common cultural roots of all European peoples and/or nations, thus establishing some minor, yet not unimportant, new landmark in the making of a European identity.

[2] Cfr. Sir J. Frazer, *The Golden Bough*, 1922, and also his commentary on Ovid's *Fasti*, 1931.

Didi, *Gljev, Croatia*
(photo by A. Mott)

Activities 2010-2012

Giovanni Kezich

2010

Forum of organization & Opening conference (18th-19th November, 2010): all participants gathered in San Michele all'Adige (Trento, Italy) to identify strategies and modalities for action. In particular, the discussion involved (i) the state of the art in Carnival research in each of the countries and the institutions involved and (ii) locations suitable for fieldwork in the forthcoming 2011 carnival season. These were to be preferably *rural* rather than *urban* in character, and will have to display at least some measure of relevance to the traditional repertoire of actions and figures (i.e. the pageant of monstrous figures, bearded or blackened, girdled with cowbells; the representation of ploughing; the bear-chase; the mock nuptial cortege; etc.). A calendar and a precise protocol of action will be devised for research on location. In principle, one ethnologist from each partner country will attend, working in small and viable international team units, selected carnival occasions in all the other countries according to a schedule to be drafted each year. Given the brevity of the Carnival season, this program should reasonably be completed in two years (i.e. the winters of 2011 and 2012). Priority will be given to Carnival occasions in Basque Country, Spain, and Poland, Slovenia, Romania, and at a second stage the new partners (Spanish, Polish, Slovene and Romanian) will attend Carnivals in Italy, Croatia, Macedonia and Bulgaria while fieldwork exchanges that already took place during *CKE I 2007-09* will not be repeated under this project. Also, the kick off meeting discussed (iii) the scheduling and modalities of the exhibition and (iv) educational activities. A public event to present the project was held in Trento, on November 19th.

Inventory work (from November 2010) on the current state of research on Carnivals and/or winter fertility rituals within the participant Museums, together with some survey as to the relevant issues of the territory in direct reach of the institutions involved. In preparation for fieldwork activities, an overview of available literature was provided, together with national bibliographies and other relevant resources. Preparatory work for the **exhibition** *Carnival King of Europe II* has entailed the assembling of materials collected in the field, particularly in Basque Country - Spain, Poland, Slovenia and Romania.

2011

Fieldwork 1 (January - April 2011). Throughout Europe, winter is the season of fertility rituals, for which pivotal dates can be the *Vasilichari* (14th January) in the Balkans, St. Anthony's Day (17th January) in some parts of Southern Italy, and then Shrove Saturday and Shrove Tuesday in the Christian calendar, that normally fall in February-March, with a slight delay in Orthodox countries. Small parties of fieldworkers (including at least one ethnologist, one filmmaker and one interpreter) reached the fieldwork locations so as to document preparations, the day of the ritual itself, and post-mortems. Fieldwork was carried out according to the protocols devised during the kick off meeting, and focused on:

a. the social aspects of the organization of the ritual in each specific social setting as part of the ongoing community culture;
b. the appearance of traditional masks and figures, with a particular view to their symbolic aspects in a comparative European framework;
c. all material culture involved (i.e. masks, costumes, natural objects).

Field experiences in early 2011 featured:

- 13rd-14th January 2011, Rogačevo and Roatince, Macedonia. Participants from Poland and Macedonia.

Rogačevo

Roatince

Rogačevo

Roatince

- 31st January - 1st February 2011, Ituren and Zubieta (Nafarroa/Navarre), Basque Country, Spain. Participants from Croatia, Bulgaria, Macedonia, Slovenia and Basque Country.

- 12nd-13rd February 2011, Sibiu and Agnita (Sibiu County), Romania. Participants from Poland, Italy and Romania.

Sibiu

Agnita

Sibiu

Agnita

- 5th-8th March 2011, Sopotnia Mała (Żywiec County) and Szymborze (Kujawy Region), Poland. Participants from Italy, Romania, Croatia, Macedonia and Poland.

Szymborze

- 24th–25th April 2011, Kosturino (Strumica region), Macedonia. Participants from Slovenia and Macedonia.

In parallel, some **film documentation** of professional quality has been gathered, both in the form of repertory material and footage recorded during current fieldwork. The following films should be thus singled out as directly relevant to the 2011 fieldwork season:

- ***The double walk of the joaldunak***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2011, 10' 30''

- ***Koza Szymborska***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2011, 11'

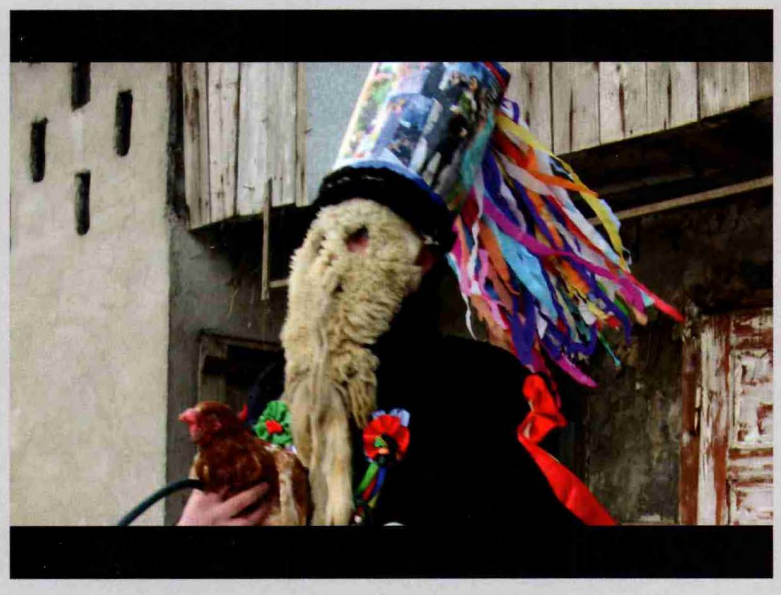
- ***One day in Agnita***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2011, 10'

- ***The Cerkno Laufarji/Cerkljanski laufarji***, idea and realization Nadja Valentinčič Furlan, camera Boris Brelih, Nena Židov, editing Boris Brelih, Nadja Valentinčič Furlan, produced by The Slovene Ethnographic Museum for Carnival King of Europe II, 2011, 18'

- ***Pusto oranje in sejanje. Kostanjevica na Krki 8.3.2011***, film by Nena Židov, Slovenski etnografski muzej, 2011, 15' 15''

- ***Vasiličari***, film by Patryk Pawlaczyk, Mariusz Raniszewski, Amudena Rutkowska, Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne w Warszawie, 2011, 15' 32''

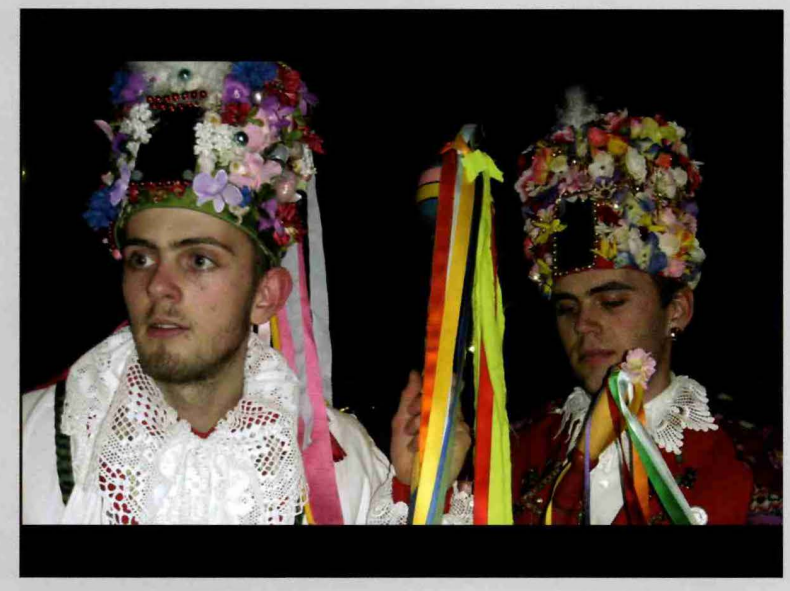
- ***Trzej Królowie z Sopotni Małej***, film by Mariusz Raniszewski, Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne w Warszawie, 2011, 20' 35''



- ***Lolele***, film by Justyna Laskowska-Otwinowska, Mariusz Raniszewski, Aleksander Robotycki, Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne w Warszawie, 2011, 14' 40''

Other relevant films

- ***Carnascèr 2008 de Soraga***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2008, 20'



- ***San Martino a Predazzo***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2010, 10'

- ***Na vòlta n val de Fiemme***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2009, 20'

- ***San Nicolò a Pozza di Fassa***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2010, 16'

- ***A good day in Sharnford. God save the plough***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2010, 15'

- ***A day in Lancova Vas***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2010, 15'

- ***The trial and execution of Johnny Woodstock***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2010, 14'

- ***The Silvesters of Urnäsch***, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2011, 13'

Carnival King of Europe II: the exhibition

Opening in San Michele all'Adige the exhibition will travel to all participant nations, in the following order:

- Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, San Michele all'Adige, Trentino, Italy (first opening): 18th November 2011 - 6th January 2012
- Euskal Museoa. Bilbao. Museo Vasco, Basque Country, Spain: 20th January - 4th March 2012
- Slovenski etnografski muzej, Ljubljana, Slovenia: 22nd March - 13rd May 2012
- Complexul Naţional Muzeal Astra, Sibiu, Transylvania Romania: 4th June - 19th August
- Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne w Warszawie, Warsaw, Poland: 1st September - 10th October

This exhibition includes real examples as well as replicas of masks and costumes, multi-media apparatus and film, and is a much larger and enriched re-casting of the 2008 one. Work in connection with the exhibition has involved lectures, seminars and film shows, and specific **educational activities** with schools in preparation for the international conference in October 2012.
In the meantime, the Etnografski Muzej, Zagreb (Croatia), the Nacionalna Ustanova Muzej na Makedonija of Skopje (Macedonia) and the Ethnographic Institute and Museum, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, Sofia (Bulgaria) will present an exhibition on a smaller scale, based essentially on films and photographs with the participation of all other countries.

Prospect of activities in 2012

- **Fieldwork 2** (January - April). Completion of the program of **fieldwork** exchanges in the selected locations of the eight partner countries.

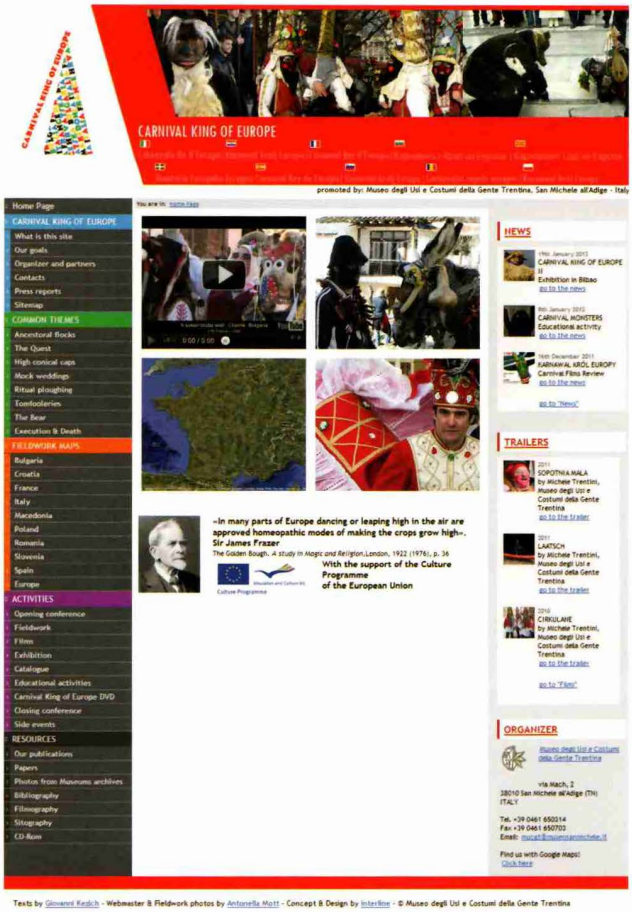
- **Publications** include the present brochure *Carnival King of Europe*, which is a catalogue of the exhibition, the updating of the site **www.carnivalkingofeurope.it**, and **films** in DVD format.

- **Closing international conference** including workshops, film shows and seminars (October 2012). Upon its conclusion, the project will present (i) a detailed report of all the activities carried out; (ii) some contribution by each national representative as to the general hypothesis of the common roots of European agrarian rituals; (iii) the drafting of some guidelines for future activities and research in the perspective of a more general survey of European Carnivals and/or other winter fertility rituals.

Field experiences 2012:
(to be completed)

- 28th January 2012, Gljev (Splitsko-Dalmatinska region), Croatia. Participants from Italy and Croatia.

www.carnivalkingofeurope.it



Carnival King of Europe, a film by Giovanni Kezich and Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, Release 2.0, 2011, 34', DVD.

Concept & texts: Giovanni Kezich; camerawork, sound & cutting:Michele Trentini. Organization: Antonella Mott.
On the field: Zvjezdana Antoš, Josep Barlek, Amaia Basterretxea, Vladimir Bocev, Simona Ghiorghies, Giovanni Kezich, Justyna Laskowska-Otwinowska, Marie-Pascale Mallé, Iglika Mishkova, Antonella Mott, Patryk Pawlaczyk, Cesare Poppi, Aleksander Robotycki, Amudena Rutkowska, Giuliana Sellan, Klara Sielicka-Baryłka, Michele Trentini, Nadja Valentinčič Furlan and Nena Židov.

Winner of Grand Prize for Academic Film of the University of Kyoto, 2009.

Synopsis

Some ancient rites to secure prosperity and a good harvest are still performed around Europe during the wintertime. These rituals lie at the origin of what we today call 'Carnival'. This film is based on the idea that the characters, actions and themes of such rituals form the structure of a common drama. In this sense, Carnival's kingdom, only apparently so unruly and ephemeral, could be said to be one of the most widespread and long-lasting in European history and Carnival itself could be called a true 'King of Europe'. So, in the First Act, a frightening horde of winter demons becomes a procession of ancestral visitors who, with the clang of cowbells, call for the awakening of people and nature. First in order of appearance are the devils from hell, then horned and hairy characters, or rather ambiguous and aggressive creatures, half human-half goats, half human-half wolves, or unsavoury, frightening old folks. Or it might be a bell-hung flock, whose steady gait recalls some millennial transhumance, or a flight of migrant birds, or other

arrogant and mysterious animal creatures, besieging the village... In still other settings, bell-ringers are much tamer: good-natured examples of the 'green man', bearded old uncles, or hybrid, well-groomed types, often described as 'oxen' or 'cows' coming down from the pastures, or as draught horses, or as the soldiers of a long-lost army.

In the meantime, sollecting eggs and carolling, from house to house, in each and every hamlet, becomes a moveable feast involving all. Cakes, eggs and wine all freely offered up.

The Second Act is that of the ceremony: the hooded harlequins are priestly figures whose gyrations mark out a magic circle, where they carry out a mock wedding ceremony. There follows another important rite of sympathetic magic: ploughing the town square, and spreading out the seeds of the coming harvest.

Once the ceremonial part is done, with the Third Act, the burlesque takes over, with certain established characters: very common is the 'goat' or some other ridiculous, ramshackle quadruped: a she-camel, a mare, a she-ass or some improbable crossbreeds thereof... Then we have a bear, one of straw as well as the proper furry beast, with his gypsy tamer...

As we get close to the end, Carnival must be stopped, captured, tried and sentenced to death, often by fire. So winter is burnt, the 'Old Woman' is burnt, Carnival is burnt, all in the same great bonfire. And with the firing of the Lenten or Spring Bonfires for the calling of March, the great cycle starts all over again.

Carnival King of Europe (2007-2009)
Italy France Croatia Macedonia Bulgaria
The proceedings.

The proceedings of the first stage of project Carnival King of Europe (2007-2009) have been published on
SM Annali di San Michele 24/2011 **'Carnevale re d'Europa / Carnival King of Europe (2007–2009)'** edited by Giovanni KEZICH & Antonella MOTT, San Michele all'Adige (TN), MUCGT, 2011, 478 p., ill.

Summary:

- **Giovanni Kezich**, **Antonella Mott** Carnival King of Europe / Carnevale re d'Europa
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- **Zvjezdana Antoš** Traditional elements in contemporary carnival customs in Croatia
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- **Vladimir Bocev** La structure des mascarades chez les Macédoniens

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(Photos by L. Gasperi)

Exhibition
Carnival King of Europe II (2010-2012)
Winter fertility masquerades in the European ethnographic context

Giovanni Kezich

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The European Carnival finds its roots in the wider grounds of winter folk masquerades, winter being the season of rituals everywhere, as opposed to the season of agricultural activities, which is naturally the summer. So, from Halloween to March, in some places once only in others many times over, the ancestors return in the guise of young villagers in masks, and pay a visit to the community of the living, promising them fertility and abundance. Up to the present day, in villages over the better part of Europe, from the Balkans to Iberia, the Alps to the Mitteleuropa of the Hapsburgs and all the way up to the British Isles, we can detect the traces of an ancient and remote ritual inspired by agrarian magic, a complex ceremony performed to make the crops grow high, to encourage and address sexuality and enhance fertility, to spur on the renewal of time and the return of the growing season. Carnival King of Europe went to the four corners of the continent to track down the surviving instances of such rituals, and has gathered them in a comparative framework to shed light on their similarities and provide an interpretation of their common denominators.

Act 1. Fear

The masked cycle begins with the rumbustious entrance of fearsome, diabolical furry bell-ringers, who represent the recurrent obsession with the ancestral, wild condition of mankind. These can be the *Krampus* on St. Nicholas' eve, marked all over Europe as one of the first outings of the masqueraders. Similar frightening characters will soon open, a few weeks later, the carnival cortege proper: yet, once the fright of the first impact has waned, the masks turn into rather merry companies of carolers and beggars *en travesti*, who come upon the stage again and again, with just a few changes, at various moments of the winter cycle.

Act II. The Ceremony

Following them come a series of tamer figures, dancing or leaping, clad in white, often featuring some high conical cap, adorned with ribbons: these are hieratic, priestly figures, who attend a specific ceremony. These characters refer to the universal type of the *lacchè* or 'harlequin' in the Alps, of *pulcinella* in peninsular Italy, of the *kukeri* in Bulgaria, and many other hooded characters to be found in Iberia. The ceremony which they attend, leaping and dancing around, is generally a mock marriage, often followed by the dragging around of a plough on the village square.

Act III. The Farce

Once the ceremony is over, the transgressive part of the masquerade is unleashed, with its own repulsive, obscene, and satirical characters. Among these there often feature a tamed bear with its own gipsy tamer, and the curious figure of some mad quadruped, be it a goat, a mule or a horse.

Alongside these, we invariably find some decrepit, verminous old folks, a man and a woman, and a series of caricature figures representing an array of traditional village characters. This is the moment for scatological innuendoes, macabre visions and obscene play-acting

Epilogue

Finally, a public trial will condemn Carnival to death, or a straw dummy representing Carnival will be dismembered, buried or burnt. Soon after the great kaleidoscope of masquerade has ended, Carnival itself will vanish in the flames of a purifying fire. This is really a rather specific script, staged all over Europe again and again, with only a few minor variations: and thus a real puzzle, by and large unsolved, for ethnologists and historians.

Documentary films:

***Na vòlta n val de Fiemme* (*Once upon a time in the Valley of Fiemme*), film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2009, 20'**

An important, yet secret function of every village carnival is that of certifying, via some enigmatic, indirect ritual method, the coming of age of a new levy of youngsters, who suddenly find themselves involved in the masquerade as actors, organizers, patrons or privileged onlookers. In the multifarious variations of the village carnival in the Trentino, all this happens somewhat behind the scenes. Not so in Carano, in the valley of Fiemme, where carnival has maintained its medieval name of *Banderàl*, in the face of the current globalization of 'carnival' this name here would be a misnomer, the masquerade is held once every four years with the specific aim of providing the occasion for the young levies to introduce themselves in the context of the village's adult life.

The name of the ritual, *Banderàl* is surely owed to the great flag (It. *bandiera*) with its horizontal yellow, white, red and grey stripes, which is ceremonially paraded and flown from dawn to dusk by the so called 'company'. On the flag itself, one can read in tall bold characters LA GIOVENTÙ DI CARANO ('THE YOUTH OF CARANO'), so as to make sure that the message is loud and clear. Similar *Banderàl* were also held in other villages of the valley of Fiemme (Cavalese, Daiano, etc.) but only that of Carano survives.

***Un giorno ad Agnita* (*A Day in Agnita*), film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2011, 10'**

There is a historical moment in which carnival masquerades merge with the civic rituals of town guilds, brotherhoods and quarters, aiming at the public celebration of the values of mutual aid and social solidarity. One example of such a fusion between the old carnival masquerade and the civic rituals of medieval townships can be found among the old Saxon towns of the *Siebenburger* in Transylvania, where the appearance of the *Lole* bell-ringers is the backdrop to the parade of the ancient guilds of cobblers, saddlers, fur-mongers, coopers and weavers along the now invisible frontier that used to divide Hungarian and Hapsburg Transylvania from Ottoman Wallachia. The *Lole* – their name, like that of 'mummers', hints at stuttering from behind the mask – are typical figures of masked bell-ringers, quite similar to some of the *Klausen* of the Tyrol and to the Croatian *zvončari*.

Today, the old Saxon immigrants of the Fourteenth Century, who returned to Germany after 1989, come back to the *Siebenburger* to celebrate, together with the Romanians, their sense of belonging to their old *heimat*.

***The double walk of the joaldunak,* film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2011, 10' 30''**

The most important cleavage in the structure of carnival is that between the ceremonial and the burlesque phases of the ritual, which are two subsequent phases and also two complementary and equally important sides of the same coin. This is seen everywhere, but a singularly good example is that of the carnival of Ituren and Zubieta in Navarra. In these two villages, on the 30th and 31st of January, two separate male brotherhoods give their members the privilege of dressing up as a *Yoaldun*, 'he-who-resounds'. The *Yoaldun* is in fact an old carnival acquaintance: clad in white, the high conical cap adorned with ribbons and surmounted by a high plume, wrapped in white fleece, with two large elongated cowbells fastened to his back, he combines together the features of figures of the ancestral flock – those who evoke and provoke with their bells some sort of awakening – and more docile ceremonial figures of the harlequin type. After the double march of the *Yoaldunak*, so martial and restrained, from Zubieta to Ituren the first day and from Ituren back to Zubieta on the second day, all hell breaks loose, and it's the 'world turned upside down' in all its fury.

***Koza szymborska*, film by Michele Trentini, Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina, 2011, 11'**

Simple masquerades of the Koza kind are still held in the Polish countryside, with their typical party of 13 actors: there's a Jew and a Hunchback in the front, a Goat – the *Koza* – and her Keeper who run around all the time, and a Chimney-Sweep. At the core of the parade, there's a Bride and Groom (the Bride is a male), the Accordionist, and the Foreman. To follow, the Old Man and Woman, and the Straw-Bear and its Gipsy tamer. In the old days, this little group of wassailers used to be part of a continuous cycle of village wassailing sessions, that used to start at St. Nicholas', and continue here and there through Christmas and the Three Kings, Candlemas and Carnival proper, all the way down to the festivals in March, Easter Monday and for the harvest, which close the cycle. Looking at these simple village masks, which are nonetheless very significant, it almost looks as if a small number of villagers stayed on duty for the duration of the winter: a whole culture of the wassailing pantomime, so popular and widespread, albeit half-obliterated nowadays, which largely transcended the narrow limits of 'carnival' alone, embracing it from all sides and the same time expanding to other calendar occasions, before and afterwards, with its ineffable dramatic message.

***The Cerkno Laufarji/Cerkljanski laufarji,* idea and realization Nadja Valentinčič Furlan, camera Boris Brelih, Nena Židov, editing Boris Brelih, Nadja Valentinčič Furlan, produced by The Slovene Ethnographic Museum for Carnival King of Europe II, 2011, 18'**

A parallel between the Cerkno Carnival Laufarija as filmed in 1956 and contemporarily, when attended by many tourists. We can see the preparations for *Laufarji*, the parade and the trial in the central square. Of course the Carnival (*Pust*) is found guilty and the execution is carried out with a mallet. The last *Laufarija* of the traditional sort was performed in 1914 (unfortunately no films or photographs are preserved from that time). Cerkno and the whole Primorska region of Slovenia fell under Italian rule between the two World Wars and the custom was banned. During World War II all masks and costumes were destroyed in German bombing raids. In 1956, *Laufarija* was revived by locals with help of ethnologist Dr Niko Kuret from the Institute of Slovene Ethnology of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts in Ljubljana. He initiated the use of ethnographic film among Slovene ethnologists in that period, and one of the results is the very precious film *Lavfarji v Cerknem* ('*Lavfarji* in Cerkno') produced by the Institute. New video materials were shot as part of visual field research carried out by Dr Nena Židov, a curator of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, in 2005 and 2009.

N.V.F.

Exhibition

Act 1

Bamburec mask
20th January, St. John the Baptist
Ratevo (Maleševo)
NETM Skopje, n° 17721
Macedonia

Vasilichar mask
Orthodox New Year
NETM Skopje, n° 17567
Macedonia

Bušalo mask
Dubošević (Baranja), 1973
EMZ Zagreb, n° 24073
Croatia

The Devil - mask
New Year's caroling
Żywiec (Silesia), 2006
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 55885
Poland

Devil mask
Baranja region
EMZ Zagreb, n° 24465
Croatia

Devil mask
Baranja region
EMZ Zagreb, n° 24468
Croatia

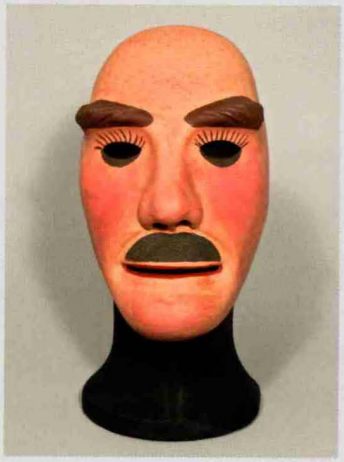
The Devil - mask
The Goat (New Year's ritual)
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)
Astra Museum Sibiu,
n° 12689 P
Romania

Birkon mask
Turčišće (Međimurje),
1981
EMZ Zagreb, n° 25886
Croatia

Devil mask
Tesero, Fiemme Valley
MUCGT, n° 8694
Italy

Devil mask
Trentino
MUCGT, n° 10906
Italy

Scraps - mask
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko),
1991
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17143
Slovenia



Bast Man - mask
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko),
1991
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17190
Slovenia

Mamuxarre mask
Unanu (Nafarroa/Navarra)
Euskal Museoa. Bilbao
Basque Country, Spain

Act 2

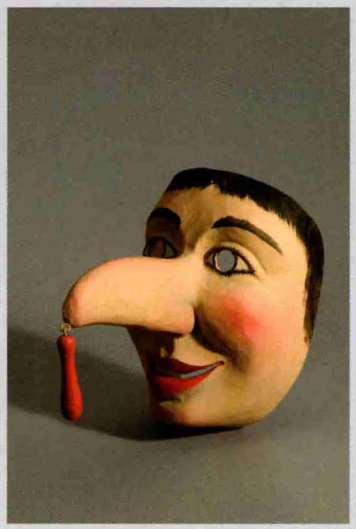
Bride, festive costume
Carano, Fiemme Valley,
1970 ca.
MUCGT
Italy

Groom, festive costume
Carano, Fiemme Valley,
1970 ca.
MUCGT
Italy

Harlequin mitre 'Capucia'
Valfloriana, 2006
MUCGT, n° 12111
Italy

Lachè mitre 'ciapelón'
Romeno, Non Valley,
1960 ca.
MUCGT, n° 12389
Italy

Kotilun gorri mask
Beskoitze (Lapurdi/
Labourd)
Euskal Museoa. Bilbao
Basque Country, France



Bufón mitre & mask
Soraga, Fassa Valley, 2008
MUCGT, nn° 12396, 10258
Italy

Plough
Predazzo, Fiemme Valley
MUCGT n° 3873
Italy

Act 3

Turoń
Christmas's caroling
Dobra (Małopolska)
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 30193
Poland

The Old man - mask
The Goat (New Year's ritual)
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)
Astra Museum Sibiu,
n° 12686 P
Romania

The Death - mask
The Goat (New Year's ritual)
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)
Astra Museum Sibiu,
n° 12687 P
Romania

The Old woman - mask
The Goat (New Year's ritual)
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)
Astra Museum Sibiu,
n° 12688 P
Romania

Gypsy - mask
Turčišće (Međimurje),
1990
EMZ Zagreb, n° 27059
Croatia

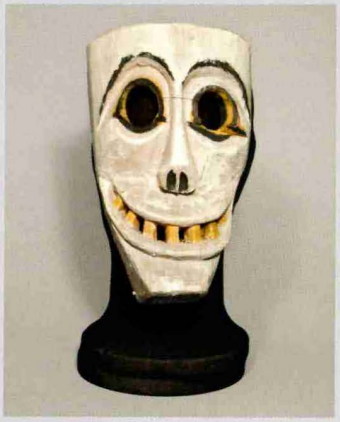
Goat
Christmas's caroling
Kąty Wrocławskie (Lower Silesia), 1987
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 49615
Poland

Old man mask (dziad)
Łękawica (Silesia), 1989
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 50530
Poland

The Bear - mask
Buhalniţa (Iaşi)
Astra Museum Sibiu,
n° 12690 P
Romania

The Rascal
(Drab) - mask
New Year's caroling
Kryg (Małopolska), 1982
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 45230
Poland

The Bear tamer
(the Gypsy) - mask
Buhalniţa (Iaşi)
Astra Museum Sibiu,
n° 12691 P
Romania



The Death - mask
New Year's caroling
Koniaków (Silesia), 1973
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 36882
Poland

Scabby - mask
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko),
1992
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17523
Slovenia

Spruce Man - mask
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko),
1992
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17524
Slovenia

Sackman - mask
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko),
1988
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17011
Slovenia

Wicked Man - mask
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko),
1992
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17521
Slovenia

Whistle
NETM Skopje,
n° 13980
Macedonia

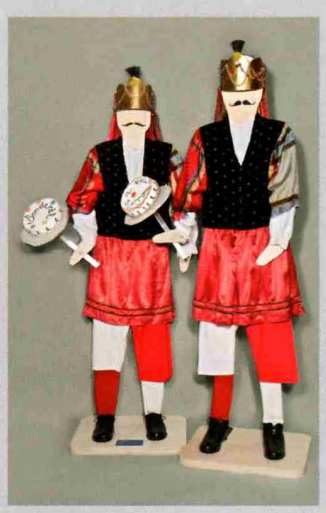
Bagpipe
NETM Skopje,
n° 4799
Macedonia

Cow
Međimurje region
EMZ Zagreb, n° 22161
Croatia

Costumes

Djolomar (Old Man)
Orthodox New Year
Beghnište (Tikveš)
NETM Skopje
Macedonia

Bride
Orthodox New Year
Beghnište (Tikveš)
NETM Skopje
Macedonia



Matazini
Banderàl
Carano, Fiemme Valley,
1960 ca.
El Banderàl Association,
Carano, Italy

Atorra
Mundaka (Bizkaia/Biscay)
Euskal Museoa. Bilbao
Basque Country, Spain

Zaldiko or zamalzain
Zuberoa/Soule
Euskal Museoa. Bilbao
Basque Country, France

The Arab
Radomyśl (Podkarpackie), 2011
PME Warsaw,
n° PME/65 /PD/1-6
Poland

The Chimney-sweeper
New Year's caroling
Żywiec (Podkarpackie), 2010-2011
PME Warsaw, n° PME/19 /PD/1-8
Poland

Horse
Christmas's caroling
Zwadroń (Silesia), 1975
PME Warsaw, n° PME 51820
Poland

The goat
The Goat (New Year's ritual)
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)
Astra Museum, n° 12685 P
Romania

Daisy
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko), 1991, 2011
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17193, 2011-010.1
Slovenia

Shovel Man
Lavfarji
Cerkno (Cerkljansko), 1991
SEM Ljubljana,
n° EM 17195
Slovenia

The Devil
New Year's caroling
Zwardoń (Silesia), 1954
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 55443/1-5
Poland

Joaldun
Ituren (Nafarroa/Navarre)
Iturengo Joaldunen
Elkartea/
Joaldun of Ituren
Association
Basque Country, Spain

The Death
New Year's caroling
Żywiec (Podkarpackie),
2010-2011
PME Warsaw,
n° PME/14 /PD/1-8
Poland

The African Man
Radomyśl (Podkarpackie),
2011
PME Warsaw,
n° PME/66 /PD/1-10
Poland

King Herod – mask
Herody, Christmas comedy
Łękawica (Silesia), 1989
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 50531
Poland

Horse
Herody, Christmas comedy
Świętokrzyskie region, 1969
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 35016
Poland

The Photographer
New Year's caroling
Zwardoń (Silesia), 1954
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 51848-50, 51852
Poland

The Grandmother
New Year's caroling
Żywiec (Podkarpackie), 2010-2011
PME Warsaw,
n° PME/18 /PD/1-8
Poland

The Jew
New Year's caroling
Zwardoń (Silesia), 1954
PME Warsaw,
n° PME 55450/1-3
Poland

Markitos
Zalduondo (Álava)
Euskal Museoa. Bilbao
Basque Country, Spain

Camel
Radomyśl (Podkarpackie),
2011
PME Warsaw,
n° PME/65/PD/1-2
Poland

Charred dummy
Valda, Cembra Valley,
2009
MUCGT
Italy

Oračі, *Lancova Vas, Slovenia*
(photo by A. Mott)

Cesare Poppi

Carnival's many masks: an introduction

Throughout Europe it appears as if that vast, complex and multifarious phenomenon known as Carnival is in full swing. It would be interesting for the history of popular culture on the Continent to go back to the early studies of the second half of the XIX century and check how many of the winter ritual practices described then in terms of 'pagan survivals' on the verge of extinction with the onslaught of modernization are still alive and well now that modernization and all that it implies appears done with and gone. In that respect, it would be even more surprising to conduct a census of how many masquerades have been revived, when not altogether resurrected via a philological reconstruction from historical documents in the last thirty or forty years. Take for instance the celebrations of St Nicholas' Day in the region comprising the historical Tyrol and adjacent areas on both sides of the Alps. In the last few decades we have witnessed an increasing participation in the masquerade by an ever-growing crowd of *Krampus* (the devils which accompany the saintly bishop in his gift-giving errands). In an increasing number of settlements in the peripheries of Europe, young men – but also a growing number of young women – invade the village streets in raucous, aggressive (if mainly effectively harmless) gangs performing for a crowd composed of both locals and tourists. This is the result of a twofold and only apparently contradictory dynamic which has deeply affected the popular culture of Europe in the last decades. We witness on the one hand the effects of globalization in the cultural field: in the case of the *Krampus* of St. Nicholas there is little doubt that the 'inspiration' or the pretext – if one prefers – has been the success of the zombie-vampire-revenants and what not *tematique* in TV and movie production. This, in turn, has worked as the trailer for the export of the American version of Halloween, itself promoted by sophisticated marketing strategies to the point of substituting, when not altogether obliterating, similar and for that matter much older practices such as the custom of collecting alms with pumpkins carved in the shape of skulls still present in living memory in Tuscany and the Veneto. However, this pincer movement has finally produced its counterpoint: in the face of the overwhelming power of the global, the local has finally reacted by inventing its own *réponse* to the by now dominant trend. This answer has been rooted in what of past practices was still present in the living memory of the performing communities while at the same time updating its details to meet the challenge of the newcomers, so to speak. Thus, for instance, the wooden masks of the *Krampus* of old are nowadays substituted by their plastic counterparts. These are not only much cheaper to produce and buy, but allow for much greater 'realism' in representing evil in all its unpleasentries. On the other hand and by contrast, instances are known where 'the return of the local' has meant the deliberate banning from the procession of all but wooden masks, with strict and explicit prohibitions issued against the use of plastic and the deployment of other innovations.

In this context, the deep cultural rationale of the reaction to globalizing trend within popular culture is to be understood in the sense given to the concept of the 'invention of tradition' in the epoch-marking (and making!) which has been the volume edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger in 1983. 'Invention' is, in the first place, the pressing back into

service, so to speak, of traits of the cultural practices of the past deemed effective in safeguarding the *status quo* in the face of innovation growing from within or coming from without. Alternatively, the invention of tradition consists of the production anew and *ex-nihilo* of practices and representations fashioned after 'the Past' whether philologically or – as it is most often the case – entirely fictitiously if ideologically pretended 'authentic'. What is relevant in both cases for the understanding of the deep nature of the phenomenon, is the role that 'the invented past' plays in shaping contemporary cultural processes.

But why 'tradition', why 'the past' it may be legitimately asked? Why the need of 'inventing' tradition at the cost of claiming 'cultural authenticity' for what 'authentic' is not by any standard? Answering this question entails a closer look at the role that the perception of 'the past' – and 'memory' as both its byproduct *and* carrier – play in shaping identities in the face of both the homologation and finally the assimilation promoted by the process of globalization. The past cannot, by definition, be either assimilated or homologated. Its nature of *res gestae* implies that it cannot come back and 'played again'. Memory, as both the selective representation of *res gestae* and their carrier in living life, constitutes the context within which features of 'the past' are selected, validated, legitimized and – as it happens with 'tradition' – invented (in both the meanings expounded above) in representing identity. An identity shaped after 'tradition', rooted in the *res gestae* processed by memory through the process outlined, cannot be assimilated and homologated in the same way – say – that present and future developments can in due course, by way of marketing, deliberate borrowing, reciprocal influences and other such dynamics of the cultural domain. This – of course and to prevent misunderstandings – happens in the perceptions as well as in the constructions of the inventing subjectivities if not in real life. History, in fact, is full of instances whereby the discarded cultural traits of a given cultural tradition have become the cornerstones of another, disputed and contested as they may have become in the process. Likewise, the diffusion, appropriation and adaptation of certain selected cultural traits cross-culturally is a well-known engine of cultural history. But the point here is not what *philologically* and from the historian's point of view can be deemed 'original', 'exclusive' and 'authentic'. The point is, rather, what, from the available pool of historical cultural material, the ever subjective dynamics of memory select and implement as markers of identity. It is at this point of the analysis that we meet the specificity of the process by which collective and subjective – or, rather, collective as subjective – cultural memory finds in the *minutiae* of the local tradition the cornerstones of local identity.

If the pace of globalization is set upon successive, encircling and expanding minimum common denominators, the answer from 'the local' proceeds in the opposite direction: while 'the global' claims what can be recognized and shared (and – incidentally – denuded and diminished of its local specificities and meanings in the process), 'the local' answers back by implementing increasingly more specific – and therefore exclusive – markers of distinctiveness selected from the discarded materials unsuitable for the process of globalization. Thus, what hitherto appeared as an insignificant detail – say a local variation on a masquerade costume otherwise shared with a number of communities in the region – is turned into the redoubt of local distinctiveness and authenticity. A chancy variation and perhaps formerly irrelevant detail on an otherwise shared canvas thus is made to become the pinpoint of exclusivity and originality.

Such dynamics encapsulate what in a now ancient essay I described as the dialectics between the global and the local. The latter sets what I termed 'markers of distinctiveness' at the border of what are perceived to be the boundaries between 'Self' and 'Other'. Yet, the geography of such boundaries is constantly on the move, according to where and how each specific historical contingency sets the terms of confrontation (Poppi 1992). The ethnography of such dynamics was at the time drawn from the case of the Ladin Carnival of the Val di Fassa (Dolomites, Northern Italy), but almost forty years on it seems to me that its general implications can be applied to the understanding of the cases considered in

the present collection, and most possibly beyond. Thus, the interplay between 'the Local' and 'the Global' occurs at different levels according to the specific circumstances of each ethnographic settings. At the local and regional level – as it is the case with the Val di Fassa and *mutatis mutandis* with the comparable scenarios of established masking traditions in the West of Europe – the issue of identity implies a confrontation set progressively to mark the distinctiveness between – say – a village against its neighbors, the selfsame village and its neighbors against a regional background, the regional background against the national and – finally – the 'national' against the Global. Contrary to what is often claimed by the very actors of the masquerades, such snow-balling trends do not imply an irreducible 'otherness' of the Local vis-à-vis the Global. As I argued in yet another contribution on the limits of globalization, the opening up of wider, global cultural horizons does not imply the disappearance out of focus till they eventually become completely invisible of local cultural details. On the contrary: globalization magnifies 'the local' inasmuch it enhances its cognitive relevance as the first and foremost carrier of cultural distinctiveness, authenticity and therefore 'identity'. In that respect, globalization acts both as a mirror and as magnifying glass for what would otherwise be forgotten as irrelevant (Poppi 1997). There would not be – to be clear – any Slow Food movement aiming at enhancing and promoting (at the global level!) the local and the authentic in the absence of McDonald's, Kebab ad Sushi joints and Pizzerias. Closer to the point, there are no more 'global' events celebrating 'the Local' as the universal dimension of 'the Global' as the grand parade of masking traditions in Pernik (Western Bulgaria) and other such festivals in both Eastern and Western Europe.

With the collapse of totalitarian regimes, the scenarios of Eastern Europe have seen deep changes in the politics of folk events. In the Socialist era folk practices – or, rather, an 'approved', policed and monitored selection of them – was played by the regime as a way of enhancing nationalism and a collective sense of belonging. This was a process largely in line with those trends which had witnessed the birth of folklore studies as a means to construct and implement the *Volkgeist* as a foundation of the 'imagined communities' of early nationalism (Anderson 2011). As testified by the essays on Poland, Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria and Mecedonia in the present collection, in the last three decades the wealth and resilience of winter masquerading practices all variously line up with the rest of the Continent in producing statements of identity against an increasingly worrying and actively perceived sense of assimilation and loss of distinctiveness. That this happens in spite of (and often explicitly against) the interference when not hostility altogether of central authority is a witness to the resilience of local agency. This appears to be bent at constructing a specific, peculiar form of 'civil society' in view of the void that the collapse of centralized policies has left in the body of society (Creed 2011; Rancane 2009; Vaicekauskas 2009).

In view of the pan-European trends outlined above, in can be argued that the persistence of masquerading practices against the pessimistic forecasts of the fathers of folklore studies constitutes a veritable revenge of Durkheim against The Antiquarians. Winter masquerading is alive and well all over Europe. Throughout the Continent it manifests itself as a grass-roots movement deeply rooted in local practice and pride against the dangers of the contemporary forms of what the Italian ethnologist Ernesto de Martino termed, albeit with reference to different ethnographic contexts, la *crisi della presenza* – 'a crisis of presence' –. In the present collection, it is the merit of the subtly perceptive essay on Macedonian masquerades by Vladimir Bocev to have caught the full implications of the otherwise consolidated (almost to the point of having become scholastic routine) thesis which sees in the enduring practice of masquerading the manifold celebration of local identity. Bocev reports how the actors of the masquerade explicitly put forth two reasons for their efforts. The first is the statement of identity in the terms expounded and expanded upon so far. The other, perhaps more problematic in its wider implications, is the persistent, hard-to-die, ever implicit and more often than expected explicit reason that the deeply socializing routines and symbolisms of the masks

bring wealth, health and fertility to the entire community. Which of the two is the 'correct' reading of the function of winter masquerading? Should we subscribe the survivalist thesis of old whereby winter masquerading is the relic of ancient fertility cults? Should we instead insist that its function is wholly and simply 'social'? Should we in other words opt for an apparently 'symbols and cognition' approach or update our approach in reductive sociological guise?

None of the two solutions appears today satisfactory in the light of the ethnographies collected in the present volume. According to Bocev, if 'identity' is the celebration of community – of its internal cohesion, solidarity, togetherness and resilience in the face of winter and death – the very selfsame is *also* the precondition for fertility, wealth and resurrection. In this respect, Durkheim can aptly and successfully be conjugated and reconciled with Frazer, making the Masquerades of Winter that total social event that they still are x-many centuries after somebody donned a mask and started running...

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Cesare Poppi

Cesare Poppi was born in Bologna, Italy, in 1953. Following a Laurea in Filosofia at the University of Bologna, he was awarded an MPhil and a PhD in Social Anthropology at the University of Cambridge, UK. He has conducted field research amongst the Ladins of the Val di Fassa (Dolomites, NE Italy) and among the Gur-Grushi speaking populations of NW Ghana. Amongst his publications *Santi, Spiriti e Re: tradizioni natalizie nel Trentino tra declino e riscoperta* (with Renato Morelli) of 1993 and *Carnascer: un rito tradizionale nella modernità* of 2011 deal with masks and masquerading in the Alpine area. He lectures at the Universities of Lugano (CH) and Trento (I) and is the scientific consultant of the project 'Carnival King of Europe'.

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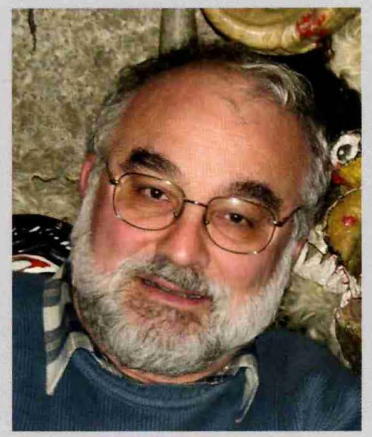


The Matazini
(Banderàl 2009,
photos by A. Mott)

The *Banderàl*, Carano, Fiemme Valley, Trentino

Giovanni Kezich

The *Banderàl*, Carano, Fiemme Valley, Trentino[1]

Observed through a narrow prism, in a regional or sub-regional perspective, the manifestations of European carnival strike one with their great discontinuity and diversity, which hardly seems reducible to a common structure. That is certainly the case in the so called 'Trentino', i.e. the old Italian Tyrol, that eccentric congeries of prevalently Romance valleys, for a long while encapsulated, through a whim of history, as a marginal Italophone protrusion of the Hapsburg Empire.

In the Trentino, the carnival festivity is generally observed by all: Shrove Thursday and above all Shrove Tuesday are still generally considered half-holidays, and rare are the villages in which at least a free pasta meal on the main square or a children's parade is not held. Still, the more ceremonial part of the festivity presents itself in very diverse and often incommensurably different forms. On the one hand, we find that the prevailing vogue of carnival floats, after the manner of Viareggio or Nice, holds the stage all over lowland Trentino and its major towns. On the other hand, in the villages of the most remote of the upper valleys, we have a significant number of small masquerades which are as obviously archaic and obscure as they are absolutely different from one another. In these valleys, the season of masquerading and carolling around may start as early as St. Nicholas' eve, with the saint himself followed by a company of demons, *Krampus* or devils. Then, in its turn comes Christmas carolling, with the parading of the great Star and the Three Kings. And then again, at carnival time proper, we have a plethora of different local ritual representations. In the upper Ladin valleys of the Avisio to the East and the Noce to the West of the River Etsch, we find elegant white figures on parade with the typical tall conical hats, adorned with pearls, feathers or ribbons, which are known all over Europe under a variety of names. Alternatively, in the German linguistic islet of the Bersntol, we witness the long chase, from morning to dusk, of rather nondescript, ragamuffin old folks, or elsewhere, at Cembra, the dragging around the village of a monumental larch which will be then raised up and burnt... In other places, a Carnival dummy is put on trial before a local jury, then sentenced to death and invariably burnt. Elsewhere again, the 'carnivals' that are to be burnt are instead tall pyramids of bamboo stakes and laurel branches, adorned with eggs and smoked herrings...: all in all, a veritable labyrinth of different rituals, symbols and costumes.

In this complex maze, we have selected for the purpose of an adequate ethnographic description, a single venue, and a single masquerade, that of Carano in the valley of Fiemme, held once every four years on Shrove Tuesday.

An important, yet secret function of every village carnival is that of certifying, via some enigmatic, indirect ritual method, the coming of age of a new levy of youngsters, who suddenly find themselves involved in the masquerade as actors, organizers, patrons or privileged onlookers. So, in this celebration of the new 'class of conscription' – the current class of perspective conscripts, born in the same year – on the verge of adulthood, carnival finds its specific roots within the ancient rituals of fertility: the agrarian fertility of the soils as well as the sexual fertility of young men and women.

In the multifarious variations of the village carnival in Trentino all this happens somewhat behind the scenes: not so in Carano, in the valley of Fiemme, where the masquerade has maintained its medieval name of *Banderàl*, in the face

[1] This text is freely translated from the book by G. Kezich, *Carnevale Re d'Europa*, Ivrea, Priuli & Verlucca (forthcoming, 2013).

The Lachè

The Sovrastante

The Zane

The Sovrastante, *the* Banderàl, *the* Vissetàe *with the* Compagnìa

of the current globalization 'carnival' would be a misnomer as the ritual is held with the specific aim of providing the occasion for the young levies to introduce themselves into the context of adult village life.

The name of the ritual, *Banderàl*, is surely owed to the great flag (It. *bandiera*) with horizontal yellow, white, red and grey stripes, which is ceremonially paraded and 'flown' around from dawn to dusk by the so called 'company'. On the flag itself, one can read in tall bold characters 'LA GIOVENTÙ DI CARANO' ('THE YOUTH OF CARANO'), so as to make sure that the message is loud and clear. Similar *Banderàl* were also held in other villages of the valley of Fiemme (Cavalese, Daiano, etc.) but only that of Carano survives.

The ritual action begins early in the morning with a Mass ('a company that starts with a Mass, is always a good company' mutters a bearded sexton to one side...) and has a restrained solemnity of its own, which is at face value not in any way burlesque, so that many people, locally, would categorically deny any relation of the *Banderàl* with a proper 'carnival'. Yet *Banderàl*, is performed on Shrove Tuesday, which is unmistakably carnival day, and the characters in costume who feature in it, the structure of the masquerade itself, which is a well-wishing carolling party with the collection of alms with an rather obvious view to prospective matchmaking, are obviously taken from the same basket as the carnivals of this part of the Alps.

Let's then follow the company out of the parish church, as it approaches its first station for 'flying the flag' – the first of nearly one hundred such acts which will be performed in the streets of the village before dusk –. In front of everyone, three pairs of crowned characters are running ahead, faces uncovered, fastened to each other by some linen handkerchiefs tied to their necks. On their heads, they wear a golden crown made of cardboard, which immediately brings to mind the icon of the Three Kings, which is so common throughout this area: save that on top of the crown, in the front, there's a plume of black cock-feathers. Looking closer, however, we realize that these characters belong to two quite different batches. The first pair, in fact, wear short red skirts and girdles of chimes round the waist. In their right hands, they hold long forks with two prongs, upon which iced cakes have been secured. These are the so-called *Matazini* – a variant of an ubiquitous nickname of carnival characters – *Matòch*, *Matòcio*, *Mata*, *Matassìn* and its female equivalent *Matassera*, which derives from the Late Latin word *mattus* that simply means 'anybody', 'Joe Blow' or 'Mr. Nobody'...

The remaining two pairs, known as the *Lachè* – from the same root as the ubiquitous 'Harlequin' – do not have either chimes or forks. Their skirts are also more sober, with a simple blue and white pattern. Both *Matazini* and *Lachè* wear long trousers – one leg red, the other leg white – underneath their skirts, white shirts, white gloves, and black velveteen vests with purple shoulder straps: a rather obvious feminine trait, enhanced by the red girlish handkerchiefs that hang from the back of the crown to cover neck and shoulders, which gives these fellows a touch of the Orient: rather like the Three Kings in fact.

Matazini and *Lachè* are then followed by the Foreman (*Sovrastante*) with the flag, clad in black, with a tie, a white carnation on his lapel and a golden sash round his arm, and by the Deputy Foreman (*Sottobanderàl*), two or three accordion players who play all the time and some elderly halberdiers (*Armadasta*). Then there follows the pack of the *coscritti*, the new conscripts, in their black old-fashioned Sunday best, – a costume, in fact, with tie, flower on the lapel, broad-brimmed hat, cigar at their fingertips, etc. – joined by all the bachelors of the village, who are classified as conscripts for as long as they stay unmarried. The whole group is closely guarded by another fellow, known as the 'Bladder-Master' (*Vissetàe*) who holds a long stick with a bunch of inflated pig's bladders tied at one end, with which he scolds the riotous lot like sheep, shouting and beating them with this funny rod of his.

Now in formation the platoon gets ready for the first of a long list of ceremonies, in front of the Town Hall. Accordion players, conscripts and onlookers stand around in a

wide circle, at whose centre is the flag, which is constantly waved about, above everyone's head as well as close to the ground underneath the Foreman's legs, balanced on the heavy metal pommel at the bottom of its hilt.

Around the circle, *Matazini* and *Lachè* – ever linked by their chain of handkerchiefs – engage in a sort of Quadrille or Morris Dance, and all of a sudden, after two or three rounds of dances, the two *Matazini* take flight and run away, and nobody will see them again. Running ahead of the group, to the sound of the chimes tied to their waist, they have a mission to fulfil, which is to pay a visit on every unmarried woman of the village, to invite them to the great ball which will be held in the evening. In exchange, they will receive a cake which has been specially baked for the occasion. This is bound to be a longish tour, since the addresses to be reckoned with are likely to be around forty, and will take practically the whole day.

Simultaneously, there is also a separate party that goes rather secretly round the village. These are two youngsters called *Zane* dressed as old folks, their faces blackened and with huge baskets on their shoulders, who ask permission to enter the houses where they commit some minor theft on the pantry. This is generally accepted, tongue-in-cheek: but at the grocer's, we saw some kilos of mortadella, a whole cheese wheel and bottles of liquor ending up in the basket....

So there are actually some three carolling parties patrolling the village: the 'company', that goes to fly the flag in front of every house, thus receiving a small offering of money, and every now and then, a little refreshment in the form of wine and sweets; the pair of the crowned *Matazini* who collect the round cakes and the assent of the girls to attend the ball; and the *Zane*, who collect supplies for the conscript celebrations, to be held in due course over the following months.

Following the flag at each of its stations, with the passing of the hours the company has become merry, particularly after the rather substantial beverages which have been served here and there. Yet there is no open transgression: laughter, jokes, some songs (*'Na vòlta n val de Fiémme / tanta campagna gh'era...'* was recorded here by Alan Lomax as early as 1954).

Dusk comes and the group, having returned to the centre of the village for the eightieth-odd flying of the flag, looks a little weathered. The next fixture is a couple of hours away, in ordinary clothes, in a hotel ballroom, for the great ball of the conscripts. A nondescript band will play, just ordinary pop music as it were.

The ritual has thus come to an end, after a rather long day. Yet one important appendix is left. The following day, Ash Wednesday, the 'company' will meet again early in the morning for 'beating the bins' (*'smacàr bandóni'*), making as much noise as possible, particularly in front of the houses of people that for one reason or another need to be lampooned. Yet the flag is not there anymore: in its place, there's some sort of long rod, with a smoked herring tied at the end of it, a symbol of the Lenten period that has just started.

No further ado will follow for some four years. Then, on the eve of Epiphany, the conscripts of the next four classes will elect the men in charge of the new 'company'. On that very evening the *maridazzo* ('mock-marriage') will take place: the company of the new draftees will go carolling around the village for the first time, stopping at every spinster's home, singing 'By our Lord's grace we have come to the sixth of January, we now want to spend this evening in marrying So-and-so with So-and-so.

Even in its preliminaries, the rite appears explicitly connected to addressing youth with the politics of matchmaking and marriage. So, the young do wait with some expectation for a fixture which is anything but burlesque, since it projects them into adulthood, as declared, if random, marriage candidates. Yet this happens in the guise of a ritual which is fundamentally heteronymous, that of carnival. In fact, all the traditional partitions of the winter masquerade are respected here: a first degree separation between 'guide masks', wearing exotic and obscure-looking costumes, and 'social masks' in their old-fashioned Sunday best, as well as more subtle ones among the 'guide masks',

such as that between the type of the *mato*, who wear chimes, and the type of the *lachè*, who do not. Besides the costumes, a number of specific carnival acts and symbols are seen: the dancing, the rod with the pig's bladders, the herring on Ash Wednesday... As for the mock wedding, that universal and primal symbol of the carnival parade, it has been erased here, in the sense that we do not actually see a bride-in-drag and a groom: yet, the marital metaphor is everywhere in the ritual: in the introductory *maridazo* sung on Epiphany, in the invitation to the ball of the *Matazini* to the local spinsters, in the constant allusions to prospective match-making, so that the whole ritual may be seen as a rather elusive theatrical plot, with a loosely-drawn weft, woven around the theme of marriage.

In this, the *Banderàl* of Carano shows both the versatile nature and the resilience of carnival ritual.

The Sovrastante
with the bandiera

Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina

San Michele all'Adige, Trento
Italy
www.museosanmichele.it

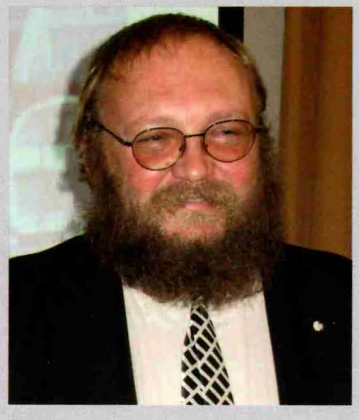
Museo degli
Usi e Costumi
della Gente Trentina

The *Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina*, the 'Museum of the Habits and Customs of the People of Trentino', or 'St. Michael's Museum' as it is known in the vernacular, is an important centre of ethnographic conservation in the Eastern Italian Alps, on the banks of the River Etsch and at the foot of the celebrated Dolomite mountains. The Museum, a large organisation with some forty rooms and a staff of over twenty, was founded in 1968 by Giuseppe Šebesta, son of a Czech war refugee. Šebesta made a name for himself as an ethnographer, archaeologist, painter, filmmaker, puppeteer and novelist. The Museum is the largest local museum of popular traditions in the whole of Italy, devoted by statute to the collection of tangible and intangible materials, the promotion of research and a gamut of other activities, focused on the local cultural identity of the Trentino region: a triangular cluster of Italian or Romance-speaking valleys, which had been for centuries an integral part of the Hapsburg domains until its annexation to Italy after World War One and which still enjoys a special autonomous status within Italy.

For the Museum's displays Šebesta decided to treat each sector of the old system of peasant self sufficiency separately, starting with agriculture and progressing in a continuous path through various branches of local crafts – ironworking, copper-beating, woodworking, ceramic and weaving – and ending up with the symbolic realm: local costumes, folklore, music and religion. With his attractive didactic demonstrations of a never-ending Neolithic era still embodied in the basic widespread abilities at the foot of those great mountains to master the manipulation of cereals and cheese, pottery and textiles, wood in all sorts of ways and metals too, in the workings of water-driven mills and sawmills, mauls and forges, Šebesta broke away rather sharply from the then-prevailing trend of Italian museums of folk traditions, directing the visitor's attention to the old-style peasant's average working day, with its own particular technology.

Giovanni Kezich

Giovanni Kezich, trained as a social anthropologist (Ph. D., UCL, 1989) and has published extensively on the topic of his fieldwork on the Italian 'peasant poets' (cf. *I poeti contadini. Introduzione all'ottava rima popolare*, Roma, 1986). Since 1991, he has been Director of the *Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina (MUCGT)*, founded by Giuseppe Šebesta, and coordinates the activities of a Permanent Seminar on Alpine Ethnography (*Seminario Permanente di Antropologia Alpina - SPEA*) with Pier Paolo Viazzo. Within the scope of the Museum's activities, he is head of the project 'Carnival King of Europe'.

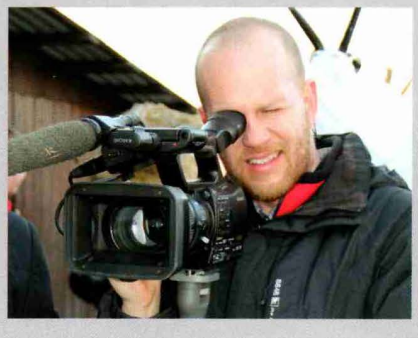


Antonella Mott

Antonella Mott, trained as a linguist and has been a curator at the *Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina* (MUCGT) since 1993. She researches local activities within the framework of an Ethnographic Itinerary of Trentino (*Itinerario etnografico del Trentino*) as well as specializing in dialect research, for which she carried out fieldwork for the creation of Corrado Grassi's *Dizionario del dialetto di Montagne di Trento* (MUCGT, 2009), which she also edited. She is currently engaged in a plethora of capacities in 'Carnival King of Europe'. With Giovanni Kezich she edited *Carnival King of Europe (2007-2009)* (MUCGT, 2011).

Michele Trentini

Michele Trentini was born in Rovereto (Italy) in 1974. He graduated in sociology at the University of Trento (Italy) and Dresden (Germany). Since 2002 he conducts research using ethnographic and visual anthropological methods at the *Museo degli Usi e Costumi della Gente Trentina*. He has directed several ethnographic film including *Three carnivals and a half* (MUCGT 2007, Premio Costantino Nigra in Visual Anthropology 2007), *The Smart Song* (ISRE 2009, Premio Costantino Nigra in Visual Anthropology 2009) and, with Giovanni Kezich, *Carnival King of Europe* (MUCGT 2009, Grand Prize for Academic Film at The Academic Film Competition in Kyoto 2009). He is also curator of 'Eurorama', the ethnographic film section of the Trento*Film*Festival.



(Photos by S. Yaniz)

Carnival and winter. Festivities, fun and religion in the Basque Country

Emilio Xabier Dueñas

Introduction

Winter is the season of the year of for Carnival. Indeed, Carnival is winter: amusing pantomimes and fun and games attractive to people of all ages. But it is also an annual cycle whose job is to link and bring together various smaller cycles with festivities based on the calendar of saint's days and the periods marked by the seasons: Advent, Epiphany, etc. up to Lent. They all have roots which can be traced back to Roman times.

Those celebrations rooted in or absorbed by the Catholic Church have continued uninterruptedly, while those considered purely as 'carnival' have frequently been prohibited, notably at the outbreak of and throughout the duration of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) and during the subsequent Franco period, when the government introduced the longest outright ban on carnival celebrations in history.

This ban did serious harm to traditional festivities; so much indeed that when they were re-authorised in 1976 they did not return with the same force in all places: part of their meaning had been lost due to various generations having failed to experience them directly.

So today we can no longer consider carnival as meaning traditional masks, costumes, multi-coloured parades, dances in public squares or indoor venues and attendance at religious ceremonies. It is more of a concentration of local residents to make a bonfire and prepare a group meal; a succession of endless parades of people in fancy dress competing in greater or lesser numbers for prizes awarded by the town council; a motley array of party-goers in fancy dress in bars, discotheques and streets. But there are also small groups of people who strive to maintain traditions such as parading from house to house throughout the village collecting food and a little money.

Winter festivities: the autumn and Christmas cycles

The language and mindsets of centuries ago survive in expressions that are still in use today: there is a wealth of stories, sayings and axioms that reflect popular wisdom. The 'script' for November 11th gives us these examples:

San Martiñez hasten da negue[1]
A cada cerdo le llega su San Martín[2]

This was the date when pigs were traditionally slaughtered (*txarriboda* or *xerriboda* in Basque). Until recently this was a real ritual, and although few people actually slaughter pigs any more it remains sporadically celebrated as a family festivity.

The products made from the pigs slaughtered are given as gifts to groups who take up collections through the streets and districts from December 6th (the Feast of St. Nicholas) onwards. A child dressed as a 'little bishop' (*Obispillo*) complete with mitre and staff leads the procession in search of these rewards: he does not give, he receives.

In some villages in southern Araba (e.g. Samaniego, Kanpezu and Lagrán) the custom still survives of building bonfires at various points in the heart of the village on December 7th and carrying flaming torches through the streets. In Labastida there is a circuit known as the *ronda*: young people dance hand in hand through the streets to the music of the village band, lighting piles of firewood and other materials stockpiled for the occasion as they go. At the end of the circuit they are all treated to roasted chestnuts and *chorizo* sausages by the town council or by the people of the village.

More bonfires are lit some days later, generally at the end

[1] Translation: 'Winter sets in on St. Martin's Day'.
[2] Literally: 'Every swine must face its St. Martin's Day', an expression used to mean 'everyone gets their comeuppance in the end'.

of the year. Useless or old objects and empty wineskins are burned on them. The renewing flames are accompanied by water drawn from a spring to preserve the health of local residents. These events take place just before and just after the winter solstice, a time when the owners of houses and estates traditionally collected rent from their tenants.

Santa Luzia egune, txarria hilteko egune[3]

Other days marked by fairs and markets include St. Lucia's Day, St. Thomas' Day and the last Wednesday, Friday and Saturday of the year. On these days local farmers (*baserritarrak*) marketed their finest produce to shoppers on the lookout for foodstuffs for their Christmas menus. Large-scale markets of this kind, which date back at least to the late 19th century, can still be found in the municipalities of Urretxu, Zumarraga, Bilbao, Donostia, Irun, Ordizia, Arrasate, Elgoibar, Tolosa, Lekeitio, Azpeitia and elsewhere. In the late 20th century contests began to be introduced into these traditional fairs: for the best bread, the best agricultural produce, the best livestock, the best craft products, etc.

A few towns and villages (e.g. Gernika, Iurreta, Lekeitio, Ea and Abadiño) maintain another tradition that was once widespread in the pre-Christmas period: groups of *Marijesiak* parade through the village centres singing old, Medieval-style songs, breaking the silence in the streets and squares on nine nights, changing the words and melody every three nights.

Nativity scenes and Christmas trees are examples of manifestations of religious beliefs in the home. There are also living representations, such as the adoration of the shepherds in Labastida.

Elsewhere in the Basque Country a fat, tipsy character known as *Olentzero* has become a popular local symbol of Christmas since the late 20th century. The origins of this figure date back through oral traditions at least as far as the 9th century as a witness to the arrival of Christianity in the area around the Pyrenees. He is now depicted in the form of an effigy carried about by a group of young people.

Stories of *Olentzero* can be found throughout Gipuzkoa and Nafarroa, but it is in the villages of Lesaka, Oiartzun and Bera that the figure was maintained (with considerable effort) as a genuine local tradition, and it is from there that it has spread to the rest of the Basque Country.

As mentioned above, traditions in which children take up collections are commonplace: *Glin glan* in Bera on December 31st *Urte Barri* in Bizkaia on January 1st (though it barely survives at present), *Gare jotzeak* and *Cencerradas* in the Baztan Valley, Ituren and Altsasu and the parades of the Three Kings in a great many towns and villages on January 5th *Aguinaldo* (a tradition that has now been lost) on January 6th and *Astotxo Festa* in Lazkao on the following Sunday, a representation of the flight of the Holy Family into Egypt.

Winter festivities: on the verge of carnival-time

In January and February the calendar includes a number of festivities that form a bridge between the previous cycle and the specific cycle of 'legitimate' events. Today at least, this period coincides with numerous carnival celebrations. These festivities are not considered as 'officially' part of carnival celebrations by the community, but they are certainly linked to them.

In January there are the following:

- 16th, Eve of the Feast of St. Anthony the Abbot: bonfires and blessings.
- 17th, Feast of St. Anthony: blessing of animals and produce. Auctions of produce, e.g. in Garai, where the

[3] Translation: 'St. Lucia's Day is pig-slaughtering day'.

event is known as *Errematiek* ('culmination').

- 20th, Feast of St. Sebastian: the *Tamborrada* drum-beating festival in Donostia-San Sebastián has deep roots: it is the city's biggest festivity, and for 24 hours the noise of the drums is ceaseless.
- 22nd, Feast of St. Vincent and St. Anastasius. In Oion there is a procession, the 'dance of the patrons' and the *revolcón del Cachi*, in which a costumed figure rolls and tumbles under the local flag.

The first few days of February are marked by religious devotion, reflecting earlier rituals.

February 2nd is the Feast of Our Lady of Candelaria or *Kandelerio eguna*. Women still carry candles to church to be blessed. These candles were traditionally lit when a storm blew up or when there was a death in the house.

February 3rd is the Feast of St. Blaise, which involves the blessing of foodstuffs (sweets, biscuits, etc.), and cords and ribbons which are said to protect against throat problems. This tradition is maintained in many locations, including Bilbao, Eibar and Iruñea. Bonfires are also made in Milagro and Peralta and there is a tradition of making special rolls and cakes.

Then comes the Feast of St. Agatha. On the eve of the feast day bells were traditionally tolled, and in many areas the tradition of singing or dancing through the streets to take collections survives and is perhaps stronger than ever.

It is a festivity for young people. In some villages it was traditionally the young men who were due to go off on their military service that year (though they were by no means the only ones) who paraded from farmhouse to farmhouse and through the streets. They originally made this journey on foot, but nowadays motor vehicles are used.

In Bizkaia, Gipuzkoa and Araba this is a day when songs are sung outside homes, addressed to those who live inside. In Nafarroa (district of Sakana) and in parts of Gipuzkoa (Aretxabaleta and Eskoriatza) it is a day for endless *Zortziko* and *Aurresku* dances in village squares, aimed at attracting the attention of the girls.

Celebrations for children

Carnival celebrations involving children are perhaps those that have changed least over the years, though here also some traditions have died out.

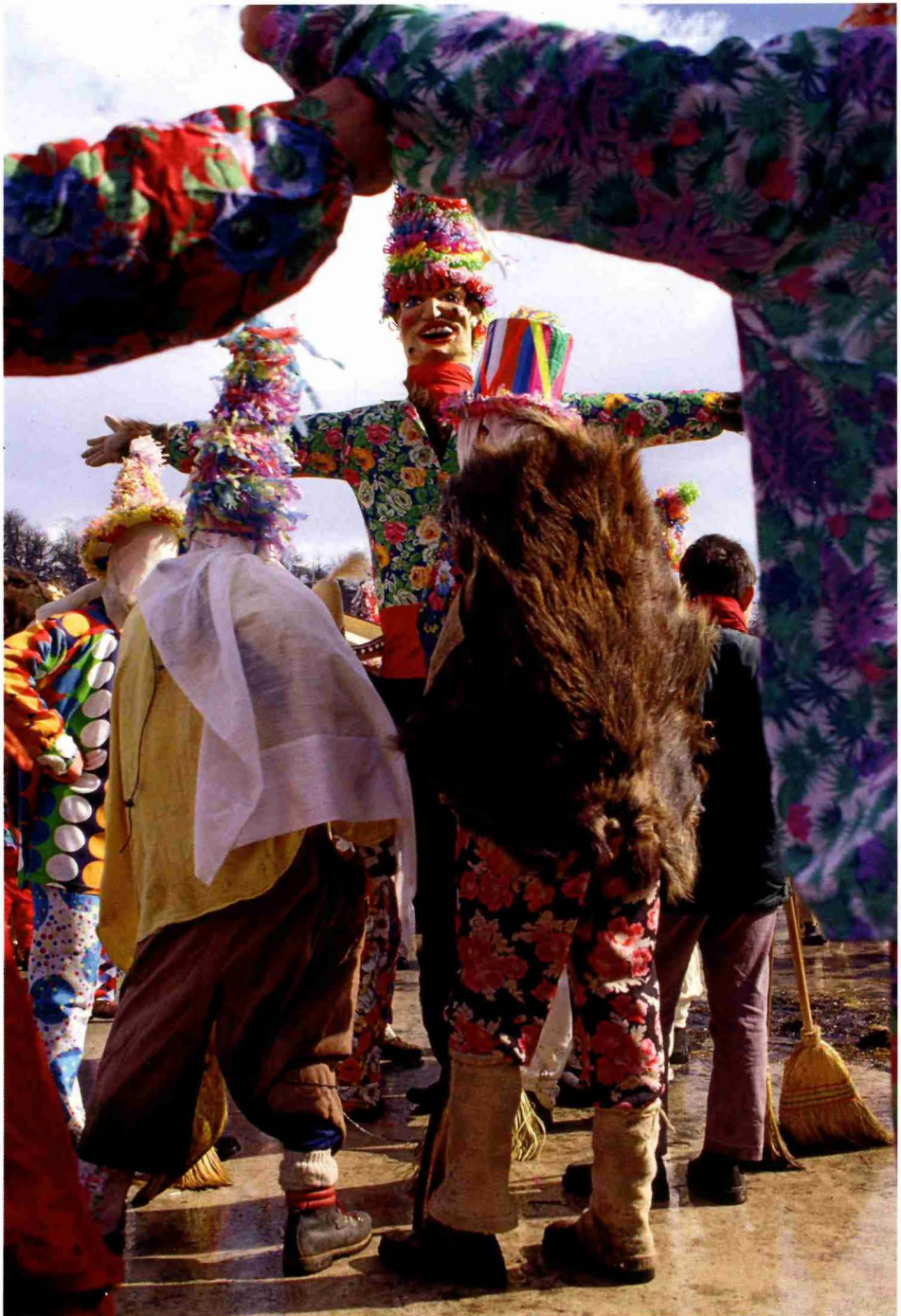
On the one hand there is the dressing up, with the making and use of costumes, which is maintained in schools and in official events organised by local councils. Along the same lines there are children's games, some traditional (sack races and other popular local games, and *piñatas*) and others more recent (bouncy castles, trampolines, etc.).

On the other hand there is the important role played by house to house collections by children and the celebrations associated with them, which are maintained to some extent.

Thursday was the main festive day for schoolchildren. The day itself and the events organised on it go by different names in different areas: in Bizkaia there is *Eguen zuri* ('White Thursday') and *Carrastoliendas* (a word derived from the Spanish term *Carnestolendas* meaning 'carnival'); in Gipuzkoa there is *Urdai Lardero* and *Ostegun Gizen* ('Big Thursday'); in Araba there is *Carrastoliendas*, *Jueves Gordo* ('Big Thursday'), *Jueves de Lardero* and *Fiesta del gallo* ('Feast of the Rooster'); and in Nafarroa there is *Zingar arraultze* ('Bacon and Eggs'), *Orakunde* and *Egun ttun ttun*.

The common denominator is that children follow a route around their village or neighbourhood. Once they begged for fruit, nuts, eggs and cold meats, but now they collect money, which is used to organise a feast in the afternoon that same day.

In some villages (e.g. Gordexola, Arrankudiaga, Elbete, Llanteno, Anitz and Arizkun) they take a rooster with them in a cage or basket, which is sometimes used later to play *Oilar Jokoa* ('the rooster game'). In this game the rooster is buried up to its neck in a box in a hollow dug in the earth and the players are blindfolded. Whoever manages to touch the rooster's head gets to keep it.



Miel Otxin,
Lantz

Kotilun gorri,
Beskoitze
(Lapurdi/Labourd)

Atorrak,
Mundaka
(Bizkaia/Biscay)

The *Fiesta de la banderita* ('flag day') in the Valle de Zuia involved two groups: one of boys and the other of girls. Each group carried a different flag from the parish church. Ecclesiastical robes and accoutrements also formed part of the *Jueves de Lardero* festivities in Lagrán and San Vicente de Arana. In both villages (and in other locations where the tradition has now died out) the festivities are graced by the presence of the 'little bishop' mentioned earlier in connection with the Feast of St. Nicholas in December.

Costumes and characters

Look and performance reflect the imagination and creativity of each individual: there are flesh and blood characters and cloth and cardboard characters.

The former include characters with characteristic costumes whose names are called at them as taunts by children as they roam the streets (*mascaritas*, *máscaras*, *kokomarroak*, *marrauek*, *cácarros*, *cachis*, *zomorroak*, *kakoxak*, *txantxoak*, *cipoteros*, *mozorroak*, *zarramusqueros*, *txatxoak* etc.), thus goading them into even more intense action.

Old clothes stored in trunks and boxes in family attics were pressed into service by the young as they left common sense behind for a few days and threw themselves into the festive spirit. Cross dressing is one of the easiest options, and thus one of the most widespread, though dressing up as farmhands, landowners, wet-nurses and babies, priests, nuns and international celebrities is also common, making for a wide range of possibilities.

The cloth and cardboard characters found in these festivities include several that are specific to particular villages or areas. Their names are associated with the characters that they depict (mainly animals and occupations), though the origin of some is unsure: they include the bear or *hartza* with his master, tinkers, shepherds with their sheep, a generic 'old woman', the anthropomorphic *ziripot*, the battle-hardened *zaku zaharrak* (literally 'old sacks'), the restless *zaldiko* (hobby horse), the expert dancers of the *Maskaradak* (*txerrero*, *gathuzain*, *zamaltzain* (hobby horse), the *banderari* (flag-bearer), the *kantiniertsa* (barmaid), and some whose attempts at dancing are less skilled, such as the *xorrotzak* (knife-sharpeners) and the *kukuileroak* or *kherestuak* (gelders), the *kaskarotak*, *ponpierrak* and *kotilun gorriak* of Labourd and the *bolantak*, *zapurrak* (sappers), *besta gorriak* and *basandereak* (lords of the wood) of the *Kabalkadak* (mounted processions).

The list goes on and on, but for the moment I shall mention just two more clearly distinctive examples: the first is the *atorrak* of Mundaka, who dress in white, in women's clothing. They form a large group of musicians with various instruments (accordions, fiddles, guitars, mandolins and flutes), and sing songs with lyrics dictated by custom. They parade through the village centre to the harbour, where a large crowd awaits them on the quays.

The second is the *joaldunak* or cow-bell carriers. The main event in this case consists of a visit to a neighbouring village. On the last Monday in January the villagers of Zubieta parade through the district of Aurtiz, where the group is joined by more members, and then on through the centre of Ituren. On the following day the people of the latter village return the visit. The group comprises mainly young people, though there are also a few children and older adults, wearing sheepskins, cowbells of various sizes and smocks worn outside their trousers, with high, conical caps known as *ttuntturroak* on their heads. The groups from different villages look very similar but can be told apart from one another by the rhythms with which all members jangle their bells in unison.

And then there are effigies made to be torn apart, burned or flung into the water. Perhaps the best known of these is *Miel Otxin* in Lantz. On Carnival Monday and Tuesday he is paraded around the village, then sentenced to be shot and burned on a bonfire. In Zalduondo there is a character

Mamuxarre,
Unanu
(Nafarroa/Navarre)

Joaldunak,
Ituren
(Nafarroa/Navarre)

Zamalzain,
(Zuberoa/Soule)

known as *Marquitos* who is first impaled on a long post, then formally executed by a preacher and burned to ashes on a bonfire.

Elsewhere around the Basque lands these 'straw men' go by the names *Hombre de paja*, *Toribio*, *Gutiérrez*, *Porretero*, *Aittun aundia*, *Zanpantzar* and many others. Most of them are found in Nafarroa and in part of Araba, and date back far into the past, but there are also some which have been created since the 1980s, such as *Sorgina*, *Aldabika*, *Intxisu* and *Paloqui*.

It is not known just where all these characters came from, which prompts scholars to look for their origins. The ideas put forward range from mythological beings to bandits who terrorised the local people.

Spontaneous and ritual acts

In some villages there are preliminary events leading up to the main Carnival celebrations on the three preceding Thursdays: *Jueves de Compadres* ('village men's Thursday'), *Jueves de Comadres* ('village women's Thursday') and *Jueves Gordo* ('big Thursday') for children. In Basque they are known as *Gizakunde*, *Emakunde* and *Orakunde*. In Bizkaia there was traditionally a feast on the Sunday prior to Carnival Sunday known as *Basaratoste*, *Kanpora martxo* or *Sasikoipetsu*, when people of all ages would take sausages, bacon and other pork products to roast and eat in a meadow or on a hillside outside their village.

On that Sunday and on the following Monday and Tuesday young people accompanied by musicians (playing accordions, *dulzainas* or *txistu* whistles) would take up collections for themselves, performing dances such as the fandango and the *arin-arin* or local *makil txiki dantzak* ('small stick dances'), after which people would give money according to the efforts made. The sums collected were then spent on organising one or more meals.

While smaller groups performed house to house, on the streets there were parodies of local personages, children taunted the costumed characters, who gave chase to their taunters, and young girls walked in fear of being daubed with mud-soaked brooms; confetti or even manure was flung at people and buildings, troupes of musicians sang songs with words alluding to local or national events and the occupations of the singers or attacking figures of authority.

Another character who roamed the streets was the al *higuí* man. In some cases, though not everywhere, this character had his own costume. He carried a dried fig hanging by a string from a pole, and walked up to children singing *'al higuí, al higuí, con la mano no, con la boca sí'*[4]. The fig was, of course, very difficult to catch. He also carried a box containing more figs, which he would deliberately leave on the ground: any children who tried to sneak up and snatch the figs from the box would get an unpleasant surprise finding that they were stuck into manure.

While some people spent the afternoons in these games and parades of costumed characters, others went to the dance. This was a key time for relationships between couples, and an opportunity for physical contact (though one might be pleasantly or unpleasantly surprised when one's partner removed his/her mask to reveal his/her identity).

The arrival of these winter festivities was a sublime sign that winter was drawing to an end. Carnival time was given a big send-off with the burning of effigies, rejoicing and dancing. Then came the 'burial of the sardine' (or herring), at which people dressed in mourning and sang dirges in a symbolic funeral for the passing of the celebrations, as the symbols of the festivities were burned or flung into the water.

[4] Translation: 'Catch the fig, catch the fig, not with your hands but with your mouth'.

Living heritage

Eating is of course a key factor for this whole period: it traditionally began with the slaughtering of pigs and until recently ended (on Shrove Tuesday or even the first Sunday in Lent), with great feasts organised with the money collected. The ritual foundations of these celebrations lie here, in the day-to-day diet and in the festivities that accompanied the slaughter of a pig or cow.

The dates on which Carnival celebrations took place in the towns and villages of the Basque Country changed, some of them more than once, in the course of the 20th century. These changes were made for various reasons, including a desire to prevent clashes of dates between the festivities of different towns.

Other reasons for change include the incorporation of additional events into the calendar and the extending of festivities, e.g. in the following cases: slaughter of a pig on the first weekend in January in Uitzi; slaughter of a calf in the week preceding the official Carnival week in Lizartza; the *Maskaradak* (Masquerades) began in early January and continued until April in 2011; in Eratsun, Leitza, Sunbilla, Ituren and Zubieta carnival celebrations are held on different days and weekends in January; the *salida de los caldereros* ('tinkers' parade') is the first Saturday in February; the *iñude* and *artzaiak* (wet-nurses and shepherds) have their parade on the second Sunday in February; the *Oinak arin* dance troupe of Beskoitze parades through the whole municipality taking up collections over three weekends.

This apparently chaotic distribution of widely differing events on different dates highlights the unique, plural, informal structure of these festivities, which are superimposed on the semi-rigid framework of tradition.

The importance of Carnival celebrations in the Basque Country, and the extent to which they have become popularised, is reflected in the way in which elements from the past are continually being revived in numerous locations (Bakaiku, Igantzi, Ihabar, Durango, Asparrena, Koartango, etc.), by the continual innovation and by the official status given to some of these events, which have been recognised as 'Intangible Cultural Assets of Interest'.

Zamalzain,
(Zuberoa/Soule)

Euskal Museoa. Bilbao. Museo Vasco / The Basque Museum in Bilbao

Bilbao
Basque Country, Spain
www.euskal-museoa.org

The Basque Museum in Bilbao, founded in 1921, is located in the heart of the Old Quarter of Bilbao. The building it occupies was formerly the first educational institution of the Jesuits, built in the 17th century.

The Museum is arranged around three floors and a cloister. The austere cloister houses one of our most emblematic works, a bulky round sandstone sculpture of zoomorphic form known as the Mikeldi idol, attributed to the Second Iron Age, Sixth century B.C.

The Museum's collection covers a broad spectrum of Basque culture over time, but it's the so-called 'traditional' elements that dominate. In short, objects that testify to the daily life of the Basque community throughout its history.

The Basque Museum's permanent exhibition recreates the traditional ways of life in the areas of pastoralism, fishing and the manufacture of linen. Different objects: furniture, tools, traditional clothes and religious artefacts bear witness to our past.

Closely bound to the world of the sea, the room of the Consulate of Bilbao brings us to the birth of Bilbao's commercial activity. Firmly established by the early 16th century, the Consulate points to trade, merchants and seamen and the linkages between the Peninsula and Northern Europe. In this space, the huge model of the Territory of Bizkaia undoubtedly most captures the attention of young visitors to our museum and helps them, very graphically, get to know the topography of the Seigniory of Bizkaia.

The museum's outreach policy hosts a program of temporary exhibitions of a monographic nature, using both its own collections and guest exhibitions.

Preservation and the dissemination of knowledge are the guiding principles of cultural action at the Basque Museum which therefore seeks to raise awareness of the cultural reality of the Basque Country, both in what it has of itself and in what it shares with other communities and towns.

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Cerkno Lavfarji, *2009*
(SEM Documentation;
photo by M. Špiček)

The Cerkno *Lavfarji*. A Slovene Carnival group

Nena Židov, Adela Pukl

On the *Lavfarji* and *Lavfarija*[1]

The Cerkno *Lavfarji* ('Runners') are today among the best-known groups of masked Carnival figures in Slovenia. Their name presumably derives from the German verb *laufen* (run) because some of the group's figures, the *Scraps* (*ta terjasti*) run around all the time. The group's Carnival performance is called *Lavfarija*. The most discernible feature of the *Lavfarji* are their limewood masks, whose origin may be connected with the operation of woodcarver's workshops; there were indeed several such workshops in Cerkno in the 19th century. The origin of the masked figures is not known, but there are some similarities with Carnival figures from the Tyrol, where the local *Wild Man* quite resembles the Cerkno figure of *Carnival*. As part of the Shrovetide customs, the *Lavfarji* 'perform' the motif of *Carnival*, the scapegoat for everything that has gone wrong, his death sentence and execution with a mallet[2]. The scenario of the *Lavfarija* makes it one of the most comprehensive 'Shrovetide plays' in Slovenia (Kuret 1984: 379-381).

There are no reliable data on the beginnings of the *Lavfarija*, which would indicate that it was actually introduced by German settlers and could be traced back to the 13th or 14th century. The last *Lavfarija* 'in the old way' was performed in 1914. In the early years of the World War One the custom dwindled because of the lack of young men, who had been conscripted into the army; after 1918 the Italian authorities banned the custom because of its presumed strongly nationalistic nature. The new authorities even tried to introduce new forms of celebrating Carnival (Carnival dances, clowns, other masks) but had little success in their efforts. Cerkno was bombed several times during the Second World War and all the masks, costumes, and requisites of the *Lavfarji* preserved from before the First World War were completely destroyed (Leskovec 2003: 316).

Peter Brelih, a native of Cerkno who had moved to Ljubljana in the interwar period, was the first to propose reviving the *Lavfarija* in 1948. The local Tourist and Beautification Society founded a *Lavfarija* board. When the board established that next to nothing had been preserved from the pre-WWI *Lavfarija*, they started to gather data on the *Lavfarji* figures and the course of the performance with the assistance of older locals (Leskovec 2003: 316-318).

Peter Brelih called on Rado Jelinčič, a pre-graduate student of the School of Applied Arts in Ljubljana, to make the masks. Jelinčič first made plasteline masks from descriptions made by local residents and then gathered their comments to make the final masks look as similar to the original ones as possible. He carved the wooden masks only after the plasteline models were given the go-ahead by the locals (Kuret 1984: 381). The only mask not made of wood (*Lamant*) was provided by local citizen Janko Pagon, and the organisers also borrowed two masks from the Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana (Cvetko 2006: 303).

A reconstruction of the *Lavfarija* was performed in 1956, with fourteen figures participating, the same number as in the last *Lavfarija* from 1914. The costumes were made by local youngsters. In addition to Peter Brelih, the *Lavfarija* board, and the locals, the ethnologist Dr Niko Kuret[3] and the Institute of Slovene Ethnology of the Slovene Academy of Sciences and Arts were instrumental in the revival of the *Lavfarija* (Leskovec 2003: 316, 318).

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[1] The Slovene article uses the spelling lavfar, lavfarija in accordance with the Dictionary of the Standard Slovene Language (Slovar 1991: 565) and the Slovene Ethnological Lexicon (Baš 2004: 278).

[2] A heavy wooden hammer of the kind used in logging (Razpet 2006: 19).

[3] Dr. Niko Kuret carried out research into the Lavfarija at the time.

After the successful performance, the masks made by Jelinčič remained in Cerkno and the borrowed ones were returned to the Ethnographic Museum. For the following carnivals, local woodcarver Franc Kobal (Cvetko 2006: 231-233) made the missing masks. In subsequent years the Lavfarji family was expanded with new figures on the initiative of the performers. The last new figure added was that of the Innkeeper (oštir) in 1997. Nowadays the group consists of twenty-five figures and twenty-six masks because the Basket Woman (ta košev) includes two masks (Leskovec 2003: 318-319).

The figures

The figures represent social classes, occupations, human weaknesses, diseases, local characters, etc.

Scraps (ta terjast): three identical figures in the group who are in charge of keeping order. Their masks are terrifying and make a big impression when they run around the group with rods in their hands clearing a way for the parade. Their costumes are covered with sewn-on woven scraps which gave them their name.

Carnival (pust): this central figure among the *Lavfarji* traditionally represents winter and all the bad things winter brings with it. His mask has a big nose, two boar incisors jut from the corners of his mouth and he wears horns on his head. His costume is covered with moss. In the parade he holds a young spruce in his hands. An interesting feature is that his costume weighs between sixty and eighty kilograms and has to be sewn anew every year.

Spruce Man (ta smrekov): represents *Carnival's* brother. His mask has a good-natured and gentle expression. His costume is covered with young spruce twigs and is also sewn anew every year. After *Carnival's* death he takes possession of the latter's spruce.

Shovel Man (ta loparjev): the figure represents the baker's trade. He is dressed in a white baker's uniform. In the parade he walks in the front holding a baker's shovel (*peel*) in his hands, with the inscription *DEATH TO CARNIVAL*. The *peel* also has a picture of *Carnival* and the current date of Carnival Tuesday.

Old Man (ta star): represents an old peasant. He is dressed in the old Gorica regional costume with a wide-brimmed hat on his head. He is the chief of the *Lavfarji* band. On Carnival Tuesday he digs up the mallet that was buried the year before, and uses it in the afternoon to execute *Carnival*. He is the only speaking figure in the group.

Old Woman (ta stara): the figure represents an old bent peasant woman. The expression of her mask shows the traces of a hard-working life. She has a single tooth jutting from her mouth. In the parade she walks together with the *Old Man* and in spite of her age busily sweeps the street ahead of *Carnival* with a birch broom.

Lámant: the only figure who wears a mask that is not made of limewood, but of calfskin. He wears horns on his head, and a short red tongue hangs from his mouth. He is dressed in white trousers and a fur coat. Across his shoulder hangs a cattle rope, and he carries a wooden, three-pronged pitchfork in his hands. Together with the *Scraps* he makes sure that *Carnival* cannot run off. The origin of his name and the meaning of the figure are not fully understood.

Ivy Man (ta bršlanast): this figure is the total opposite of *Carnival*. He represents spring and all the good things spring brings with it. His mask has a merry, smiling expression. His costume, hat, and scarf are covered with ivy leaves and he carries an ivy twig in his hand. His costume requires between eight and ten thousand ivy leaves to be sewn on to it and is sewn anew every year.

Daisy (Marjetica): in the parade she walks together with *Ivy Man* since she also represents spring. She has a pleasant, smiling face and wears her hair in long plaits. Her green costume is strewn with white daisies. Together with *Ivy Man* she symbolizes spring.

The premises of the Cerkno Lavfarija Society where the masks are made and kept (SEM Documentation; photo by M. Špiček)

Bast Man (ta ličnat): this figure represents a shepherd. He is dressed in a coat made of linden bast and has cloth trousers, wears a hat, and holds a shepherd's staff in his hand.

Straw Man (ta slamnat): represents the roofing trade. His costume is covered with straw and gives the impression of a real straw roof. His hat, too, is made of straw. His mask has a smiling, mischievous expression.

Furry Man (ta kužuhov): the figure represents a shepherd or peasant, a highlander. His mask is dark red with a big round nose and meaty lips. He is dressed in a thick sheepskin coat and wears a cap made of the same material. He carries a basket on his back from which a large cowbell dangles.

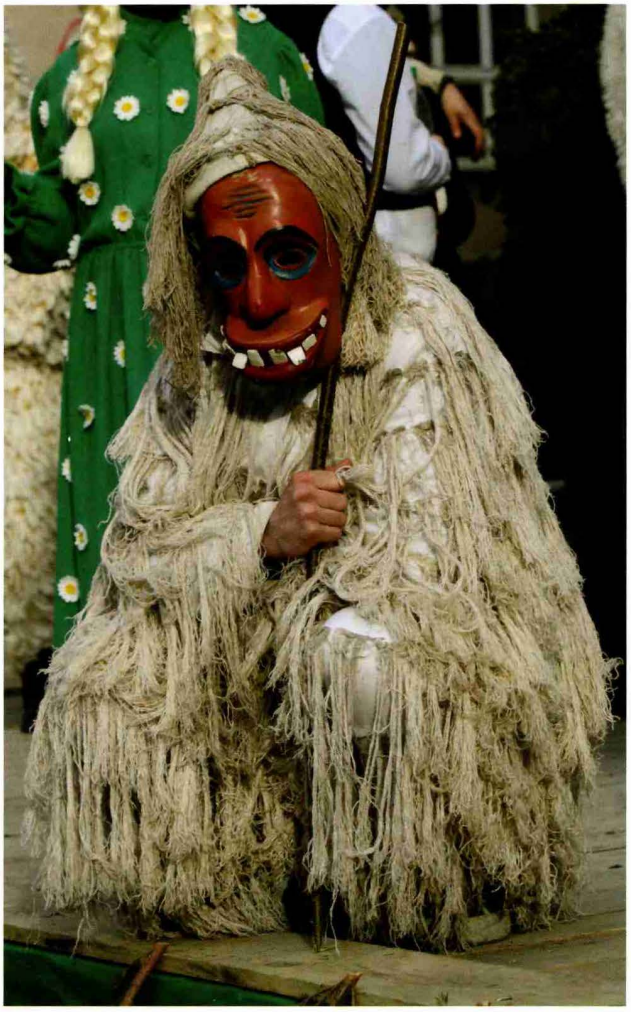
Scabby (ta krastav): this figure represents the diseases that trouble people. His face is covered with scabs, he is dressed in an ethnic costume, and in spite of his poor health merrily plays the accordion.

Sackman (ta žaklev): wears a bonny smiling mask with red round cheeks and a big nose. His costume is covered with strips of sackcloth and he belongs to the pastoral figures of the group. In the parade he plays the zither.

Feather Man (ta perjev): the figure imitates a deceased local – Kurnški Janez (*Chicken John*) – who was some kind of local character. His costume and cap are entirely covered in white chicken feathers.

Mister and Madam (gospod in gospa): this couple represents the bourgeoisie of Cerkno. Their masks, costumes, and behaviour express refinement, haughtiness, and elegance. They walk together in the parade, but near the end and somewhat separated from the other figures.

Drunk Couple (ta pjan in ta pjana): these two figures represent a human weakness – tippling. The man's mask has the expression of a drunk person and he can hardly walk. He stumbles about, rolls on the ground, and wants to turn into every inn on the way. He carries an empty bottle in his hand. The woman's mask has an evil expression



Scraps, *Cerkno, 2009*
(SEM Documentation;
photo by A. Pukl)

Carnival, *Cerkno, 2009*
(SEM Documentation;
photo by M. Špiček)

and she constantly runs after her husband to prevent him from falling or turning into the next inn. But she also has a drink with him now and then. In order to keep her husband in line, she is usually much more strongly built than he is.

Wicked Man (ta žleht): limps, uses a walking stick, and chases children with it; he has a pigtail or pigfoot in his rucksack and plays the barrel organ.

Basket Woman (ta košev): represents a peasant woman carrying her drunk husband home from the inn in a basket on her back. The husband wobbles his head while his wife carries him, bending under his weight. The figure consists of two masks.

Wild Man (ta divji): represents a forest man who is not civilised and is afraid of civilisation. He is dressed in animal skins, his mask is horrifying, but his expression is at the same time frightened. His hair is long and unkempt, and he is afraid of people.

Innkeeper (oštir): represented innkeeper has a merry, smiling face.

The course of the carnival

The carnival starts on the first Sunday of the year when the first *Lavfar* makes his appearance in the streets of Cerkno, followed by more *Lavfarji* every Sunday. By Carnival Sunday all the 'green' masks have to be made (*Carnival*, *Spruce Man*, *Ivy Man*). Before Carnival Sunday, the *Old Man*, *Old Woman*, *Sackman*, *Scraps*, *Scabby*, and *Furry Man* make the round of the neighbouring villages to collect gifts (foodstuffs) and dance with the housewives *'for big turnips to grow'*. On Carnival Sunday, all the figures are present to participate in the central event: the parade of the *Lavfarji* in the main square, in front of the 'imperial and royal court' where the judges read the indictment against *Carnival*. *Carnival* tries to escape several times but the *Scraps* always catch him and finally lock him up until Tuesday.

On the morning of Carnival Tuesday the *Lavfarji* dig up the mallet and in the afternoon the parade returns to the main square, where *Carnival* is found guilty and sentenced to death by the mallet. He is executed by the *Old Man*, *the Lavfarji* dance a ritual dance called *ta kapcinarsko* (a polka combined with rolling on the ground) then they take the body of *Carnival* to an inn where he lies on his bier until midnight when the carnival ends in Cerkno or they take him to an unknown place. In the past they used to drag a log through the town on Ash Wednesday and burn a straw effigy (Kuret 1984: 385-386; Leskovec 2003: 320-324).

The organisation of the *Lavfarija*

The organisation and execution of the *Lavfarija* is in the hands of a young men's club, which initially operated as part of the Cerkno Tourist and Beautification Society until an independent society, the Cerkno Lavfarija Society, was founded in 1992. The masks and costumes are the property of the society. Since the revival of the *Lavfarija* the age structure of the carriers of the tradition has greatly changed. They used to be men aged between thirty-five and forty, but now they are youngsters of around twenty. Women participate in the preparations for the *Lavfarija*, and two take part in the Carnival group (as *Daisy* and *Madam*). The society strives to preserve the *Lavfarija* in as original a form as possible (Leskovec 1997: 122, 124). Oral tradition has it that the *Lavfarji* used to have their own house and land in the past. For some time, the Cerkno Lavfarija Society had its seat and premises for keeping the masks and costumes in the local boarding school, today its seat is in an old house in Cerkno. The premises are called the *Lavfar kamanda* (Lavfar Command Post).

The *Lavfarji* and the Cerkno Museum

The Cerkno *Lavfarji* have cooperated fruitfully with the Cerkno Museum (a branch of the Idrija Municipal Museum). For a time, they actually had their premises in the Cerkno Museum. Between 1988 and 1991, the Cerkno Museum purchased the masks and had new ones made. The museum was instrumental in the declaration of the Lavfarji as a monument of moveable cultural heritage in 1991. On the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the revival of the Cerkno *Lavfarija* in 2006, the Cerkno Museum opened a permanent exhibition entitled *Carnival is guilty – The story of the Cerkno Lavfarji* (Magajne, Leskovec 2006).

The *Lavfarji* and the Slovene Ethnographic Museum

The Slovene Ethnographic Museum has several masks of the Cerkno *Lavfarji* in its collections. Four masks were acquired in 1947, one was commissioned by the museum from the Cerkno woodcarver Avgust Hadalin, and the museum acquired three masks from Peter Brelih. Brelih had commissioned three masks (*Carnival*, *Scraps*, and the *Old Man*) from Avgust Hadalin in 1938 for masquerading with his children. Hadalin made them according to Brelih's memories from his youth. In 1947, Peter Brelih first lent the masks and later sold them to the then Ethnographic Museum in Ljubljana (cf. Kuhar 1993: 120).

In 1956, the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp organised an international exhibition entitled *The Mask, All People, All Times*, in which the Ethnographic Museum, in collaboration with the Institute of Slovene Ethnography, participated with two masks of the Cerkno *Lavfarji – Carnival*[4] and *Scraps*. A photograph in the exhibition catalogue presents the entire *Lavfarji* group (Kuret 1956a). Together with some other Slovene Carnival figures, two *Lavfarji – Carnival* and *Scraps*[5] – have been on display at the International Museum of Carnival and Masks in Binche, Belgium, since 1975 (Tomažič 1997: 442; Revelard 1991: 19).

In 1963, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum prepared an exhibition *Slovene Folk Masks*, which included all the Cerkno *Lavfarji*. Some were presented as full figures (*Ivy Man*, *Shovel Man*, *Scabby*), the others only with the masks they used at the time. France Kobal, the grandson of the Cerkno woodcarver Blaž Kobal, made eight masks for the exhibition (Makarovič 1963: 7, 19; Kuret 1964: appendix VII). In 1967, the Slovene Ethnographic Museum presented *Slovene Folk Masks* as a guest exhibition in Bled and at the Ethnographic Museum in Belgrade (S. n. 1967: 194). Between 1990 and 1992 the restorer Dušan Tomšič from Borovnica made nineteen masks for the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, including of the new figures introduced after the revival of the *Lavfarija*. Today, the permanent exhibition of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum, *Between Nature and Culture*, features twenty masks of the Cerkno *Lavfarji*.

[4] *Carnival* was not presented with his 'original' mask, but with that of the *Wild Man* (Kuret 1956a).
[5] Dr. Niko Kuret was instrumental for the inclusion of the figures in the exhibition.

Permanent exhibition Carnival is guilty, *Cerkno Museum, 2006 (SEM Documentation; photo by I. Cvetko)*

The exhibition Slovene Folk Masks *at the SEM, 1963 (SEM Documentation)*

Dr. Niko Kuret (SEM Documentation)

The Cerkno *Lavfarji* on film

Several films have been made of the Cerkno *Lavfarji*: the reconstruction of the *Lavfarija* in 1956 was recorded in the film *Lavfarji v Cerknem* (*The Lavfarji of Cerkno*, 1956), and it was followed by *Ti si kriv* (*You are found guilty*, 1961), *Cerkljanska lavfarija* (*The Cerkno Lavfarija*, 1977), *Lavfarija* (1978), *De be bla ripa bel debjela* (*May the turnips grow big*, 1980), and *Izdelovanje lesene maske* (*Making wooden masks*, 1986).

The Slovene Ethnographic Museum recorded the events in Cerkno with a video camera on Carnival Sunday in 2005, and on Carnival Tuesday in 2008[6]. The images from 2005 show the premises of the boarding school, where the seat of the Cerkno Lavfarija Society was at the time, and where the *Lavfarji* kept their masks, costumes, and requisites. The film then records the masquerading and conduct of the performers, and the mood during the preparations. This is followed by the formation of the parade, its progress along the local streets and arrival on the main square where *Carnival's* sentence is read out. A part of these images was used in the presentation of the *Lavfarji* in the film *Carnival in Slovenia* (2005), which is part of the film collages in the permanent exhibition of the Slovene Ethnographic Museum *Between Nature and Culture*. The material from 2005 was also used to edit the film *Lavfarji izza odra* (*Lavfarji from the backstage*), which shows the 'background' of the *Lavfarija* on Carnival Sunday. It presents to its viewers the moments that are 'hidden' from the visitors to the *Lavfarija*, including the transformation of the youngsters, the performers in the *Lavfarija*, into Carnival figures. The film was first presented at the scientific symposium *Fašenk v etnografskem filmu*[7] (*Carnival in ethnographic film*) in 2006 accompanying the paper *The importance of contact between the cameraman and the Carnival performers – the case of filming the Cerkno Lavfarji*. The film was shown at the '*Etnovideo maraton*' in the Slovene Ethnographic Museum in the same year. The film record of the *Lavfarija* of 2009 shows the events on Carnival Tuesday: the search for the mallet in the morning, the afternoon parade to the main square, and the execution of *Carnival* with the mallet. This material has yet to be edited.

Wooden Lavfar *mask, 1930s (SEM Collections; photo by M. Habič)*

[6] The film was made by Nena Židov.

[7] The symposium was held in Ptuj on February 20th, 2006 and organised by the Institute of Slovene Ethnology, SRC, SASA, and the Bistra Scientific Research Centre. The paper and film were prepared by Nena Židov.

Final thoughts

To the people of Cerkno the *Lavfarija* is an important element of their local identity, and the *Lavfarji* nowadays also perform to promote their home town. Every year on Carnival Sunday the locals are joined by numerous visitors, who come to Cerkno to watch the parade and the sentencing of *Carnival*, and Carnival Sunday ends with the performance of a music band. The *Lavfarji* occasionally participate in Carnival events outside Cerkno. In 1962, they were at the *Kurentovanje* Carnival in Ptuj, in 2007 at a Carnival event in Italy (Pulfero/Podbonesec). They have also participated in the Carnival in Ljubljana in recent years. Cerkno is one of the biggest ski resorts in Slovenia and the *Lavfarji* also promote their home town at events that are not related to Carnival. In 2007 for instance they performed at the Tourism and Leisure fair in Ljubljana. They also contribute to the promotion of Slovenia; in 1997, the Slovene Post Office issued two stamps with the figures of *Scraps* and *Carnival*. In 2008, the *Lavfarji* were proposed for inscription onto UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage[8]. In 2008, Slovenia founded a register of its intangible (living) cultural heritage, which for the time being has only one entry. The register will of course be completed and there is hardly any doubt that the *Lavfarija*, its elements and particularly its liveliness, will be included in the register of intangible (living) heritage.

Lavfar *on a stamp issued by the Post of Slovenia in 1997*

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Slovenski etnografski muzej
The Slovene Ethnographic Museum

Ljubljana
Slovenia
www.etno-muzej.si

The Slovene Ethnographic Museum is the national museum of ethnology, created through the development of Slovene ethnological and anthropological thought and the oldest Slovene institution of ethnology, founded in 1923. The museum has collections of national and European significance, testifying particularly to the traditional culture of territories inhabited by Slovenes as well as to their everyday life, especially of the rural population. It is also a museum with some equally important collections originating outside Europe. A museum of cultural identities; a link between the past and the present, a museum 'about people, for people'. Through its annual round of exhibitions and other events – about Slovenes, including minority and expatriate communities of other Europeans and non-Europeans alike – and through its rich educational programme and publications, it presents and reports on traditional culture in Slovenia and the culture of some of the world's other peoples, on the material heritage of both everyday life and festivities, and on the intangible heritage of knowledge, values, skills, wisdom and creativity to be found in the Slovene ethnic sphere, both in the Diaspora and elsewhere.

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Bell-ringers of Rukavac, 2009
(photos: p. 104 by I. Pervan, EMZ
pp. 98/98, 103, 107 by Z. Antoš, EMZ)

The bell-ringers' tradition

Zvjezdana Antoš

Introduction

In some regions of Croatia, carnival and carnival customs begin as early as the Feast of the Epiphany[1]. In the Kastavština region in the hinterland of Rijeka, carnival begins on St. Anthony's Day[2] with the hanging of the carnival mannequin or *pust*. The last three days[3] before Ash Wednesday are generally considered to be the actual days of carnival. The most important one is Shrove Tuesday, because masked parades take place the whole day and end with the burning of the pust. Carnival has nothing in common with Christianity, which means that it relies on an earlier, pre-Christian heritage from the domains of magic, religion and mythology. It does not therefore surprise us that the Catholic Church, as well as the civil authorities, tried to suppress shrovetide customs and, even more so, the carnival spirit that opposes every form of authority (Vitez 2002: 355; Lozica 2006: 76). Just like other traditional practices, carnival customs have changed over time. Some modifications in carnival observance were brought about by political changes. For example, masking the face was prohibited in western Kastavština by the ruling authorities from 1918, which has resulted in the transformation of bell-ringers' masks in this part of the region from the former grotesque animal masks into flower-decorated hats (*krabujosnica*). During the communist period, the authorities suppressed many traditions and partly prohibited the practice of carnival (Rihtman-Auguštin 1990: 9), mainly because they feared the social criticism expressed during carnival (Lozica 2005:76). Since 1991, after Croatia became independent, numerous bell-ringers groups (*zvončari*) have appeared and take part in local parades with the intention of preserving and articulating local identity[4]. The continuance of carnival phenomena and symbols has enabled carnival customs to survive beyond the traditional way of life and to adapt to historical changes (Lozica 2005:76).

The customs associated with masquerade can also be observed at earlier times of the year, appearing in certain parts of Croatia on different dates. This is why certain authors consider that masked processions begin on St. Nicholas Day[5] or St. Lucy's Day[6], continue through the Christmas season with the procession of *koledari* and end with the procession of *zvezdari* or *betlehemari* on the 6th of January (Gavazzi 1988). The Croatian cultural anthropologist Ivan Lozica claims that we can distinguish between two seasons of masquerade, the first occurring during winter (winter solstice) and the second at carnival time (Lozica 2006: 82). The origin and historical meaning of carnival have been the focus of interest for many researchers. The earliest records of carnival were made by Antun Karmaneo in 1712, Antun Relković and Luka Ilić Oriovčanin in 1846, as well as by Nodilo, who wrote an interpretation of carnival at the end of the 19th century (Lozica 1997:30). Contemporary researchers have arrived at the conclusion that this older material does not represent actual facts, but rather reflects the prevailing research concept of the time, which considered everything coming from the city and 'corrupting' the morality of peasants (intemperance and rampant behaviour during carnival, disrespect for the Church and public authorities) dangerous, which is why protective magic was stressed in the first place, rather than fertility magic (obscene scenes) (Vitez 2002: 356). Certain ethnologists have paid greater attention to certain elements of peasant carnivals, so that there are numerous contemporary interpretations of carni-

[1] The 6th of January.
[2] The 17th of January.
[3] Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.
[4] After 1991, several more recent bell-ringers groups appeared and we can say that the last of them was established last year. There are currently 13 bell-ringers groups in Croatia. Their numerousness speaks of the growing interest in the bell-ringers tradition.
[5] The 6th of December.
[6] The 13th of December.

val today (Lozica, Rajković, Nikočević, Povrzanović, Supek-Zupan, Škrbić-Alempijević, Zebec).

This work is based on field research conducted in the region of Kastavština within the scope of the EU project 'Carnival King of Europe' in January and February of 2008, 2009 and 2010. During research, we used the standard ethnological method of interview to obtain relevant data about the contemporary meaning and forms of carnival processions. During the research, we collected numerous items for the museum's collection (the complete equipment of individual bell-ringers groups), as well as audio and visual material (photographs and video material) where we recorded the contemporary forms of carnival festivities.

The bell-ringers tradition

In many parts of Croatia, including Kastavština (surrounding Rijeka), we encounter traditional masked figures ('bell-ringers') dressed in sheepskin and wearing bells, their faces covered by masks and with tools swinging in their hands. Their processions start every year separately from other masked processions. Traditional figures of Kastavština, the *Bell-ringers of Halubje* present themselves through movement, performing a kind of dance and making noise. The *Bell-ringers of Žejane and Mune* have hats with cascading paper ribbons in various colours, reaching almost to the floor and falling over their faces[7]. They carry a cudgel or stick and try to harmonise their bell ringing in pairs. The group the *Bell-ringers of Halubje* includes from 100 to 150 members, but other bell-ringers groups usually include 20 to 30 members, while in the villages of Žejane and Mune there are from 6 to 12 bell-ringers. Their procession is part of a centuries-old traditional ritual in Croatia.

One example of this is the parade of *Rukavački zvončari* (the *Bell-ringers of Rukavac*) which starts on the first Sunday after *Antonja* or St. Anthony's Day[8], the official beginning of the carnival. The parade begins in the early morning in Rukavac, from where the bell-ringers depart on a 20 kilometres walk through the neighbouring villages and return to Rukavac in the evening. The whole parade has a set structure: it is headed by the flag bearer and musicians, followed by bell-ringers always walking in double file formation, and two elders (*kapo*). Before entering a village, they start rhythmically ringing the bells. As they enter the village, they start dancing, forming groups and a circle around which the flag bearer has to go three times, after which the circle opens under rhythmic bell ringing. After that the bell-ringers socialize with the locals, enjoying local specialties (wine, fritters, sausages, etc.), singing and playing favourite songs, and then they form up the procession again and go on to visit other villages. The carnival procession culminates in the village of Zvoneće, where they are welcomed by people arriving from the furthest villages. It is particularly important that this procession involves intensive contact between the community and the bell-ringers, something which has remained completely unchanged for a long time. This is clearly visible during the entire carnival procession: numerous people accompany the procession all the way, villagers welcome them offering food and beverages in front of their houses or on the main square in larger villages, where food and drink are served to all participants. A special feature of the bell-ringers of Rukavac is that they do not take part in festivals and carnival events in other villages and towns; they can be seen only twice a year during their processions from Rukavac. The bell-ringers appear for a second time during carnival season on carnival Monday and Tuesday when they visit the houses of their fellow vil-

[7] Film *The Bell Ringers of Žejane* (28.2.2010); Research: Zvjezdana Antoš; Recording: Zvjezdana Antoš; Editing: Zvjezdana Antoš; Cutting: Darko Antoš, DVD, Duration: 8' 20''.

[8] The 17th of January.

lagers. On this occasion the bell-ringers of Rukavac wear different costumes, i.e. trousers made of bags decorated with bands and chequered shirts and carry little bags of ashes. Their procession has a somewhat different structure, because they visit the houses of their fellow villagers, make a ritual entrance into the yard, light a fire in front of the house door and, when smoke starts rising, bring out the master of the house and his family to breathe in the smoke. The hosts give them eggs and bacon as presents and serve traditional carnival food (sausages, fritters, cabbage, wine and coffee). There is also a 'devil' appearing in the company of the bell-ringers, who teases women and often imitates intercourse. After this, they march off in file and visit the next house with bell ringing and noise. The bell-ringers of Halubje also have a bear character who constantly carries out pranks accompanied by two guards as Nazi soldiers who can't manage to control him.

> 'Smoke and fire, strewed ashes, sooty faces, hats with flowers and bands; collecting eggs, bacon and other carnival food; music and noise; teasing women and imitating intercourse; scaring women and animals – all this is indicative of magical, ritual carnival activities which have remained unchanged into the 21st century' (Lozica 2007: 73).

The carnival mannequin, which in Croatia is called by different names such as *Pust*, *Poklad*, *Fašnik*, *Krnjo* or *Princ Karnevala*, also has a similarly old ritual tradition. For example, in the region of Kastavština, the carnival mannequin is called *Pust*. This figure is given characteristics reflecting important social and political events in the region during the past year, which is why the *Pust* is called by 'ridiculous' or 'derogatory' names, most commonly names of public or political celebrities. The carnival mannequin *Pust* is first hung in Kastavština on St. Anthony's Day[9] and finally burned at the end of carnival, i.e. on Shrove Tuesday. According to some sources, the execution of the carnival mannequin is a reminder of actual human victims, the sacrifice of the King (Caro Baroja 1979: 312; Lozica 2007: 73), which can be associated with the renewal of the cycle of nature (Frazer 1951: 319-330). Having lost its mythological and magical message and meaning over time, carnival has manifested itself in new forms and taken on new meanings.

What does it mean to be a bell-ringer?

The formerly dominant magical function of carnival has been replaced by the function of emphasizing and preserving local identity. To participants in the carnival procession, this custom does not mean the same as it did to past generations, but it is interesting that the activities and requisites remain the same as those dictated by tradition. This is visible in the fact that bell-ringers processions still consist of men only dressed up in characteristic costumes with bells and sheepskin. It is very often mentioned that today's bell-ringers find it especially appealing to be a bell-ringer due to the attractiveness of the masks and costumes, the liberal behaviour, noisy rebellion, plenitude of food and drink, which is why I wanted to know what it represents today. The bell-ringer considers it a special honour to be a bell-ringer! 'A bell-ringer is not a masquerader, he is a complete person with a powerful presence, who must be nice to everybody and have fun doing this'.

It is particularly interesting that bell-ringer groups have increased in number and popularity during recent years. This is why the leaders of bell-ringer groups have come up with a code of conduct, which defines 'who is eligible to be a bell-ringer'. This code of conduct requires that

[9] The 17th of January.

Bell-ringers of Halubje,
Matulji, 2009

Bell-ringers of Mune, 2009

Bell-ringers of Frlani, Matulji, 2009

'a bell-ringer must be tidy, must not get drunk, must be laughing, all day in good shape, polite to his hosts, greet them properly, sing a song or two... He should bring some cheerfulness, a little merriment, to make people forget their everyday life, because everybody gets a little bit crazy then... First of all merriment, because everybody is impatiently looking forward to see us, they are asking when we will be coming, on what date, to get themselves prepared as well as they can. The whole village lives for this event, as if it were a sort of Olympic Games!'

Some groups have their code of conduct published on their web site. In addition to this, a bell-ringer can be only a person born in a certain place and with at least one parent coming from this place.

The exceptional value of the present-day carnival is that bell-ringer processions in villages are not only part of a tourist presentation, but represent authentic cultural heritage. Examples of this are bell-ringers' processions in Rukavac, Halubje and Žejane, which are very similar in structure. The organisation of this carnival event is motivated by the fact that it has an extraordinary traditional value for the local community. They do not want tourists in their community, they do not want to become a tourist attraction, but they want to take part in preserving an old custom and have a good time in doing so. Due to its qualities, the bell-ringers tradition of Kastavština (bell-ringers from Bregi, Brgud, Halubje, Mučići, Mune, Rukavac, Zvoneća, Žejane, Frlanija, Vlahov Breg, Korensko) has been recognized as part of the living cultural heritage manifested through practices and rituals and has therefore been protected and included in the UNESCO List of Global Intangible Heritage since 2009.

The role of contemporary carnival

Today's carnivals have an entertainment role and therefore a multiplicity of formats. We recorded the celebration of St. Anthony's Day (*Antonja*) in Matulji (in the surroundings of Opatija), where people in contemporary masks, accompanied by loud music and horn blowing, take away the keys from the mayor during a special ceremony and deliver the keys to a new mayor who rules during the carnival. During the carnival there is the so-called *Pusni dani* (*Mesopust*), the carnival mannequin, *Pust* is hanged on a lamp-post, usually in the centre of the village or townas the official announcement that carnival has begun. The social criticism expressed in this process is part of the national culture and, according to Lozica, 'is a balance between seriousness and lightheartedness' (Lozica 2007: 72). One of such examples is shown in the film recording about the introduction of a new custom of celebrating *Antonja* in Frlanija, organised by the *Bell-Ringers of Frlanija* on the 17th of January 2008. The recorded material has a special documentary value, because it is a record of the present, a certain moment, i.e. the introduction of new ways to celebrate old traditions[10].

The statement that tradition has a multiplicity of formats in modern times is well illustrated by motorised carnival processions, which appeared in Kastavština in the 1970s and 1980s and represent, according to Lozica, 'the nucleus of social criticism' (Lozica 2007: 73). Local participants use the 'allegorical trailers' as a stage for so-called 'living pictures', which use symbols, costumes and excellent decoration. In 2010 the carnival theme was 'swine flu' or '*prašća*

[10] This film material was recorded spontaneously as the authentic document of a certain moment in time. My colleague Vladimir Bocev of the Ethnographic Museum in Skopje and I wanted to record the celebration of Antonje (St. Anthony's Day, the 17th of January) and made a planned visit to Matulji. On one occasion we were invited to a private celebration of Antonje in the nearby village of Frlanija over Opatija, where a new tradition of Antonje was introduced that evening. In this village, a new company named *Frlanski zvončari* (the bell-ringers of Frlanija) was established a year ago. The celebration of St. Anthony's Day, so-called Antonje, began with the blowing of nine horns and the hanging of the *Pust* on a lamp-post in front of a house, where it stayed until it was burned on Shrove Tuesday. This was followed by an all-night party of participants not dressed as bell ringers.
We wanted especially to present the atmosphere and emotions of the people and researchers which formed the background of the spontaneous interview. Colleague Bocev filmed the material and I made the interview and slightly edited it for this purpose from recorded material of atotal duration of 30 minutes.
Film: *Antonje Celebration* (17.1.2008 in Maturlji and Frlani); Research: Zvjezdana Antoš; Recording: Vladimir Bocev; Editing: Zvjezdana Antoš, DVD, Duration: 4' 20''.

gripa' in the local dialect. Participants in the carnival today are not aware of the magical and ritual activities meant to protect the village and its inhabitants from evil and misfortune. They simply want to continue regional tradition because they are proud of it and recognise it as part of local and national identity.

Thanks to the traditional value and popularity of bell-ringers traditions, local carnivals have also been organised in the entire region of Rijeka, including the '*Smotra zvončara i feštara*' in Matulji, '*Halubajski karneval*' in Viškovo and '*Grobniščina zvoni*' in Čavle, etc. In search of a specific cultural and tourist product closely associated with the local and regional tradition, the *Bell-ringers Festival* (*Smotra zvončara*), dedicated solely to the performance of traditional bell-ringers groups, was established in Matulji fourthteen years ago. A more recent event is '*Grobniščina zvoni*' ('Grobinšćina rings'), which also features participants from other countries and strives to gain international relevance.

Conclusion

During field research in in Kastavština in Croatia, valuable audio and visual documentation was recorded. This material represents an invaluable asset in the research and recording of carnival customs as expressions of intangible heritage. To us as curators this material is extremely valuable because of the possibility of reinterpreting museum objects and their contextualisation to contemporary trends. Some of this material has a particular documentary value because it records the present at a certain moment, i.e. the introduction of new ways of celebrating old traditions. The formerly dominant magic function of carnival has been replaced by the function of presentation and preservation of local identity. For present-day participants of the carnival parade this custom does not have the same meaning as it used to have for the older generation, but it is interesting that the activities and requisites have remained the same as dictated by tradition. This is illustrated by the fact that bell-ringers processions still consist only of men wearing characteristic costumes with bells and sheepskin. The carnival demonstrates solidarity and identification with the rural community, which is visible in the gathering, the procession and the hospitality. The customary communication pattern is still present, expressed in the formation of a procession, music, wine and visits to all villages, followed by an evening party for everybody after the procession returns to its original village. The attraction of masks, loud festivity, eating and drinking is so strong that the carnival has outlived forgotten messages and meanings, manifesting itself in new forms,. Thanks to the traditional value and popularity of bell-ringers traditions, local carnivals have also been organised in the entire region of Rijeka. Today's traditional 'International Carnival of Rijeka' and the 'International Carnival Parade', as one of the programs that are part of this event, have directly influenced the development of carnival festivities in the whole region of Kvarner (Carnival in Opatija and Lovran) and beyond.

Bell-ringers of Rukavac,
Rukavac, 2008

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Etnografski Muzej Zagreb
Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb

Zagreb
Croatia
www.emz.hr

The Ethnographic Museum in Zagreb is a national institution established in 1919. Its holdings largely consist of objects documenting Croatia's ethnographic heritage but it also houses items from many other European countries, besides a very large collection from non-European cultures. The objects mostly date from the 19th and early 20th century.
The museum's activities are focussed on the research and documentation of contemporary themes in ethnology and cultural anthropology. The results of these efforts are then presented to the public in exhibitions and publications as well as through various educational activities. Numerous projects have also been carried out in cooperation with other European ethnographic museums.

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Djolomarj, *Begnishte (Tikveš)*

Les mascarades et l'identité

Vladimir Bocev

Les mascarades et l'identité

Dans cet article j'essaie d'exprimer quelques observations sur les nombreux types d'identité qui se manifestent à travers les mascarades dans quelques communautés rurales. Les observations sont faites sur la base des recherches conduites sur l'état actuel des mascarades, donc, j'essaie de parler de l'identité à travers la culture spirituelle, de laquelle, je pense, un grand nombre d'archaïsmes et d'éléments authentiques ont été conservés (Филиповић, М. С., 1954: 62.), qui sont très importants lorsqu'on parle de l'identité d'un groupe particulier de personnes ou bien de l'individu.

La double fonction des rites, c'est-à-dire la fonction manifeste et la fonction latente, est bien connue dans la science ethnologique (Milić, V., 1978: 675, 676.). Depuis le début du 20ème siècle, dans les descriptions des mascarades on souligne toujours leur fonction manifeste. Les chercheurs ont transmis seulement les témoignages donnés par les informateurs et les participants aux rites, qui affirment que les mascarades sont pratiquées pour souhaiter la fertilité, la prospérité, la santé, la sécurité, le bonheur, etc. Il est bien evident que soit les participants soit les chercheurs ont été apparemment conscients de la fonction manifeste des rites (Петровић, Ђ,. 1984: 21).

Si une croyance est diffusée parmi le peuple, même la communauté existe, mais si on ne pratique pas certains rites, la survie de la communauté est mise en question. Donc, il s'agit de fonctions rationnellement conçues dont les objectifs étaient clairs et la communauté était conciente (Milić, V., 1978: 676). Mais, est-ce que le désir d'approvisionnement de nourriture et de santé a-t-il tout seul forcé les gens à maintenir ces traditions à travers des siècles?

Une des caractéristiques essentielles du village macédonien, qui se maintient jusqu'à nos jours, était l'unité en ce qui concerne les obligations communes, les responsabilités et les droits.

La responsabilité commune dans le village se posait sur le même bases que celle de l'ancienne communauté tribale (famille, genre) et territoriale (village, paroisse, district). La communauté avait la responsabilité des infractions faites par ses membres, ainsi que pour les infractions qui avaient lieu sur son territoire, même si l'auteur de l'infraction était inconnu. Le conseil de village avait la fonction de tribunal populaire. Il contrôlait le comportement de chaque individu et de chaque famille, tous ceux qui avec leur comportement s'éloignaient des normes sociales recevaient des réprobations et critiques par la communauté. Ce droit du conseil de village est derivé de la responsabilité penale collective (Светиева, А., 2005, manuscrit)

La littérature ethnologique nous apprend que dans le passé une des sanctions les plus sévères pour un membre d'une communauté était l'expulsion de la même. Cette peine imposée, l'individu puni difficilement pouvait être accepté par une autre communauté (Филиповић, М. С., 1991: 292-303).

Si on observe cette punition à travers le prisme de l'identité, on peut affirmer qu'avec l'expulsion de la communauté l'individu perd l'identité, c'est-à-dire perd la possibilité de s'identifier avec la communauté à laquelle il appartenait. En d'autres mots, il est privé de l'identité de groupe, qui dans le passé était beaucoup plus importante que celle d'individu (Nedeljković, D., 1939: 4-5.). En perdant l'identité de groupe, l'identité collective de l'individu n'existait pratiquement plus.

J'ai fait cet exemple afin de souligner l'importance de l'identité de groupe ainsi que l'importance de l'unité de groupe de la communauté, qui était crucial pour sa survie (Филиповић, М. С., 1991: 292.). La communauté a dû trouver un mécanisme à travers lequel elle assure le renforcement de l'unité de groupe et les liens cohésifs parmi ses membres (Pavković, F., N., 1978: 51-65.). En d'autres

Vasilichar, baba,
Vevčani (Drimkol)

Vasilichar,
Vevchani (Drimkol)

Karneval,
Strumica

Baba,
Demir Hisar (Zeleznec)

termes, elle a dû trouver un mécanisme grâce auquel la communauté, à travers l'individu, confirmera son identité de façon permanente, ou à certains intervalles. Cela signifie que l'individu avait un besoin de s'identifier avec la communauté et vice-versa (Паликрушева, Г., 1989: 57-62). Les individus qui perturbaient et menaçaient les liens cohésifs de la communauté, menaçaient aussi l'identité, donc ont été sévèrement punis (Ђорђевић Р. Т., 1948: 267, 268.).

Beaucoup de personnes regardent ce mécanisme de confirmation de l'identité dans la fonction latente des rites. En effet, on considère que la fonction réelle des rites est d'établir des liens d'intégration stables et solides parmi les membres d'une communauté. Les rites ou les cérémonies collectives sont importants pour maintenir la continuité du groupe (Gidens, E., 1996: 99, 98.). Ils doivent réduire le sentiment d'insécurité et d'incertitude, les risques de conflits internes, le risque d'abandon et de dispersion de la communauté (Milić, V., 1978: 676.).

Cette fonction des rites, selon ceux qui soutiennent cette théorie, renforce les relations internes des membres de la communauté en confirmant la communauté comme un ensemble harmonieux. C'est-à-dire, grace aux rites l'identité ethnique de la communauté se reflète dans la communauté même et dans l'individu, membre de la communauté et, par consequent, de la communauté aux autres communautés de la même région et au-delà.

En pratiquant les rites on envoie un message clair aux membres de la communauté qui les réalisent, mais on envoie ce même message aux personnes qui sont hors de la communauté. Ce message est: "C'est nous", tandis que le message envoyé à sa propre communauté et à l'individu qui en est membre est: "C'est moi".

En Macédoine, au cours des vingt dernières années les mascarades sont dévenues de plus en plus nombreuses et plus participées. Dans les villages où elles ont été toujours organisées croissent en nombre de participants, là où elles ont été abandoné, se renouvellent (Боцев, В., 1993: 114-123.). Mon analyse de l'identité individuelle et de l'identité de groupe va commencer avec la mascarade Vasilichari du village Vevčani, dans la région de Struga, qui a lieu les 13 et 14 janvier, c'est-à-dire le début du nouvel an selon le calendrier julien. Il s'agit d'une des mascarades les plus célèbres en Macédoine (Боцев, В., 1998: 145-148).

Apparemment ce rite reflète fortement l'unité de groupe et les liaisons solides entre les habitants du village Vevčani. En réalité, la connaissance plus approfondie de certains villageois fait remarquer l'existence de différences entre eux. En effet, ils sont divisés, de façon générale, en deux groupes. En vertu de cette division, les groupes masqués du village s'organisent chacun pour soi.

J'ai remarqué quatre niveaux où se manifeste l'identité chez les participants au rite. Premièrement, ce qui est commun à tous les participants est la manifestation de l'identité de groupe, qui est associée à l'appartenance au village, c'est-à-dire: "C'est nous". Le deuxième niveau est la manifestation de l'identité nationale, qui se réalise à travers la critique et le ridicule des autres groupes ethniques qui vivent dans le village, dans les environs et au delà, c'est-à-dire "nous ne sommes pas comme vous, nous sommes différents". Le troisième niveau de l'identité est la manifestation d'appartenance religieuse ou bien d'appartenance à la chrétienté orthodoxe, à travers des masques qui représentent, la plupart du temps dans une connotation négative, les prêtres chrétiens orthodoxe, la visite de l'église dans le village et la moquerie du clergé d'autres religions, le plus souvent l'islam, c'est-à-dire "nous sommes des croyants chrétiens inébranlables". Le quatrième niveau de l'identité se manifeste à travers la mise en évidence de l'appartenance au groupe local, ou l'appartenance à un groupe particulier au sein de la communauté du village, c'est-à-dire "nous sommes plus intelligents, plus nombreux etc.".

Après les conversations eues avec les gens masqués, j'ai appris que le motif principal de la participation à la mascarade *Vasilichari* pour les habitants de Vevčani est la conviction de l'appartenence à la communauté du village, bien que certains d'entre eux ne vivent pas à Vevčani. Un des participants a dit: "Je prend part à la mascarade parce que je suis Vevčanec" (je proviens de Vevčani).

L'épreuve du fait que le rite *Vasilichari* est conçu par les villageois comme un moyen pour confirmer leur propre identité avec la communauté du village vient des travailleurs à l'étranger originaires de Vevčani, qui se masquent selon la coutume le 13 et le 14 janvier, jours qu'ils commémorent comme jours fériés.

Le message général qui se répand au cours du rite *Vasilichari* dans le village Vevčani, concernant la vérification de l'identité personnelle et collective est le suivant: "Voilà, c'est nous, Vevčanci (nous sommes de Vevčani)".

Dans le village Kuceviste, dans la région de Skopje, où la majorité de la population s'est déclarée Serbe, le jour de *Procka*, Carême-Prenant, le dimanche ou le jour avant le Carême, a lieu une mascarade appelée *Sureti* (Видиниќ, Г., 1998: 159-161). Cette communauté rurale pratique ce rite pour faire remarquer et pour exprimer son identité ethnique de manière claire et évidente. En effet, pendant le rite les drapeaux nationaux serbes sont arborés, les gens endossent l'uniforme avec des signes serbes, décorés avec les couleurs du drapeau serbe.

Le message est clair. Les habitants du village de Kuceviste, à travers le rite, expriment le désir de s'identifier avec l'état serbe, et à travers l'état ils s'identifient avec le peuple serbe.

J'ai remarqué une manifestation intéressante de l'identité locale dans le village Dzvegor, dans la région Pijanec, dans la Macédoine orientale. Pendant la mascarade, qui a nom *Survarskare* et qui a lieu le 14 janvier à l'aube, c'est-à-dire le premier de l'an selon le calendrier julien, un groupe déguisé était venu du village voisin qui s'appelle Grad (Ville). Le groupe déguisé de Grad, une fois terminé le rite dans son village, s'était rendu à Dzvegor. Ce groupe différait de l'autre à cause des masques qui étaient portés par les participants, et des inscriptions avec le nom du village: *Village-Ville* (Selo-Grad), qui étaient affichées sur le dos et la poitrine.

Dans les mascarades il y a aussi la possibilité de mettre en évidence des partis politiques. Tel est le cas du rite *Sureti*, dans le village Ljubanci dans la région de Skopje, qui se tient pendant la fête de Carême-Prenant, c'est-à-dire le dimanche, ou le jour avant le Carême. Certains des participants masqués avaient écrit sur le dos le nom du parti auquel ils appartiennent. D'autres portaient des inscriptions du parti antagoniste, que les masques critiquait et ridiculisait.

Selon les exemples susmentionnés, donc, la caractéristique générale des mascarades est la manifestation de l'identité individuelle et de l'identité de groupe dans le sens d'appartenance à la communauté. La manifestation de l'identité et l'appartenance à la communauté est indiquée par la participation massive des résidents actuels et anciens de la communauté et surtout avec la visite obligatoire à chaque maison du village faite par les participants au rite. Il est bien connu que personne ne veut que la procession masquée esquive sa maison, action qui peut être interprétée comme privation de l'appartenance à l'identité de groupe de la communauté. Inversement, la visite à la maison par le groupe masqué confirme l'identité des personnes qui y vivent. Par conséquent, le jour du rite ceux qui n'habitent plus dans le village se donnent du mal à ouvrir leurs maison afin d'être visités par la procession et les villageois qui l'accompagnent.

Autre exemple que je desire proposer est la mascarade *Vasilichari* dans le village Rogatchevo, dans la région Tetovo, qui a lieu le matin du 14 janvier, le nouvel an selon le calendrier julien. L'un des nombreux travailleurs migrants de ce village, ne pouvant pas être présent au rite a demandé aux *Vasilichari* de jouer le rituel devant la porte de sa maison même si elle était fermée.

Le carnaval qui se tient dans la ville de Strumica le mardi après la fête de Carême-Prenant récemment a beaucoup de participants. Aujourd'hui il a une telle importance dûe au nombre des gens qui y prennent part qu'il est devenu un élément important de l'identité de la ville. Les autorités municipales ont décidé de insérer un masque dans l'emblème de la ville. De cette manière la manifestation de l'identité des citoyens de Strumica, par l'intermédiation du carnaval, est exprimée par un segment du rite, c'est-à-dire le

Badnjibabe,
Raotince (Polog)

masque. En insérant le masque dans l'armoirie de la ville, il y a eu, en quelque sorte, une compression de l'identité du groupe dans le masque. En d'autres termes, le masque est converti en un emblème qui exprime l'identité de groupe des habitants de Strumica pendant toute l'année, et non seulement à Strumica, mais aussi ailleurs.

Une grande partie des bouchers de la ville de Prilep participe à la mascarade *Meckari* (les hommes-ours), qui a lieu pendant Carême-Prenant, le dimanche, ou un jour avant le Carême. Le groupe déguisé fait des tours dans la ville, accompagné par un orchestre composé de deux tambours et deux fifres, il visite les maisons de tous les bouchers qui vivent dans Prilep. Grâce aux *Meckari* nous avons remarqué que seulement en Macédoine l'identité corporative et professionnelle est manifestée à travers une mascarade. Au groupe des *Meckari* ne se peuvent pas associer les autres habitants de la ville. Les bouchers soulignent que personne ne peut prendre part au rite à l'exception des bouchers. Pour cette raison les boucher sont reconnaissables des autres habitants de la ville. Quand vous les voyez dans la rue avec leurs masques fascinants, scintillants, ornés de perles, avec un grand nombre de peaux d'ovins sur leur corps, vous dites: "Voici les *Meckarite* (les hommes-ours), les bouchers".

L'état actuel des mascarades impose les questions suivantes: "Quelle est la fonction latente des rites mentionnés ci-dessus et quelle est la fonction manifeste?", "Est-ce que les participants de ces rites sont toujours inconscients de la puissance intégrante des rites qui sert à souligner et préserver l'identité personnelle et de groupe?"

Selon les exemples mentionnés ci-dessus, il est évident que les participants sont conscients de cette fonction des rites. Ils la mettent en relief, et pour certains d'entre eux c'est la seule raison qui les pousse à participer aux mascarades. Je pense que la fonction latente est plus manifeste, tandis que la fonction manifeste est refoulée de plus en plus.

Aujourd'hui la conviction que la communauté peut être en danger de décadence et de destruction si elle ne pratique pas ces rites, n'est pas dû à la croyance qu'elle n'aura pas assuré la santé, l'alimentation et la fécondité, c'est-à-dire les besoins essentiels de la communauté. Mais elle a la croyance que si on ne pratique pas les rites, les traces de l'identité que les gens portent en eux-mêmes peuvent s'effacer, ces traces sont perçues comme conditions fondamentales dans la vie moderne pour la cohésion entre les membres de chaque communauté particulière, et son maintien dans un groupe compact (Obrębski J.: 9).

Nous pouvons trouver les raisons de cette situation dans les processus sociaux qui ont eu lieu ces dernières années (Rihtman Augustin, D., 1971: 7e). La désintégration d'un ordre social qui a duré plus de 50 ans, fait sentir en péril soit la stabilité économique de l'individu que celle de la communauté.

Ces processus ont ébranlé au fond la sécurité de la communauté et de l'individu en mettant en péril son identité. Pour contraster cette gêne, l'individu a cherché refuge dans les valeurs traditionnelles, qu'il a considérées comme stables, et à l'intérieur desquelles il peut donc trouver sa sécurité, ou trouver la confirmation de son identité à travers la confirmation de l'identité de groupe de la communauté à laquelle il appartient ou dans laquelle il vit ou il a vécu autrefois.

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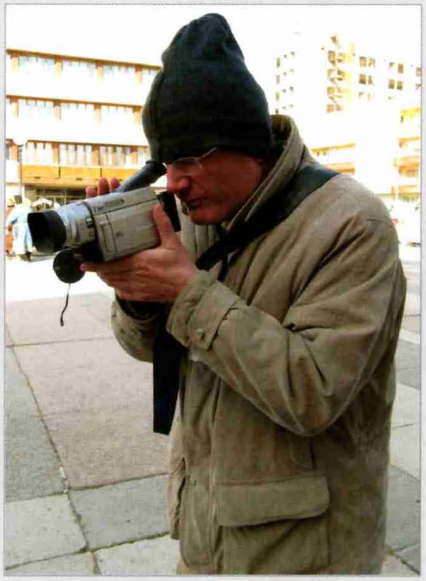
Nacionalna Ustanova Muzej na Makedonija
Musée ethnologique de Macédoine
Skopje
Macedonia

Le Musée ethnologique de Macédoine a été créé en 1949. Depuis cette date les objets de la culture traditionnelle des Macédoniens sont collectés, stockés, étudiés et présentés.
Les objets conservés sont plus de 20.000, divisés dans les collections suivantes: Habillement national, Instruments musicaux traditionnels, Coutumes nationales, Bijoux populaires, Architecture traditionnelle, Objets en bois pour le mobilier, Objets métalliques pour le mobilier, Tissus folkloriques, Combinat populaire (traditionnelle) et Céramique populaire (traditionnelle). L'exposition permanente a été ouverte en 1995, sur une superficie de 2.000 mètres carrés. Elle présente des éléments de toutes les collections et les régions. Les expositions temporaires, organisées en collaboration avec les musées ethnographiques de la Macédoine et de l'étranger, traitent des sujets différents de la vie traditionnelle des Macédoniens.
Au début des années cinquante du 20ème siècle le Musée ethnologique de Macédoine a commencé à produire des films de documentation ethnologiques. Jusqu'à aujourd'hui ont été produits plus de 20 films de documentation ethnologiques concernants les us et coutumes, l'artisanat et la vie quotidienne des Macédoniens et des communautés ethniques vivant sur le territoire de la Macédoine. Le Musée ethnologique de Macédoine publie la revue *Recueil du Musée ethnologique*.

Vladimir Bocev



Master of Science en Ethnologie, il a terminé ses études à l'université Saints Cyril et Méthode à Skopje, en Macédoine. Au Musée de Macédoine de Skopje il travail comme ethnologue, conservateur, chargé de Recueil Instruments (nationaux) de musique et Coutumes nationales.

Ses principaux objectifs d'intérêt sont les coutumes, en particulier les mascarades et les carnavals. Il travail dans le domaine de l'anthropologie visuelle. Il est auteur de 14 films documentaires de sujet anthropologie, il a participé à de nombreux festivals en Europe consacrés au film de documentation anthropologique, où il a gagné des prix. Il a participé à plusieurs projets internationaux, il a organisé le colloque international sur les coutumes, il est auteur de beaucoup d'expositions ethnographiques, qui ont été réalisés dans plusieurs pays européens, il a publié nombreux articles qui ont traité les problèmes de la culture traditionnelle des Macédoniens et il a donné des conférences aux étudiants en Macédoine, en Pologne et en Bulgarie.

Kukeri of Vresovo

Iglika Mishkova

Kukeri of Vresovo

Masquerade rites are common all over Bulgaria. They vary and there is an entire list of names for the masked groups – *arapi*, *babugeri*[1], *brezaya*, *bubratzi*, *dedi*, *deditzi*, *dervishi*, *dzhamali* and *dzhamalari*, *dracusi*[2], *eshkari*, *kamilari* and *kamili*, *kukeri*, *mashmarotzi*, *metchkari*, *pesiyatzi*[3], *rogatch*, *startzi*, *stanchinare*, *survakari*, *survaskari*, *suroviskari* and *tchaushi*[4]. Often these names also appear across the entire Balkan peninsula, and in other countries the picture is additionally enriched by new names. Over the decades disputes have periodically arisen about whose masquerade practice is more ancient in the region, which one stands at the core of all those that appear in other nationalities, and who copied from whom. But this is part of the specificity of the battle over 'historical heritage' and national identity in the Balkans which we will not go into here. What unites all the groups is the presence of masked participants and of other players around them. Due to the input of the media and of some scholars, in Bulgaria the most popular and publicly circulated name is *kukeri*, often applied to all masked groups.

In the current text I present a Bulgarian group that is emblematic of the masquerade, a group of *kukeri* from Vresovo village. The village is located in South-Eastern Bulgaria, at the foot of Stara Planina mountain. Its name comes from the Greek word *Vries*, which means spring. Until the early 1970s the village had a population of 2,500 inhabitants, who gradually began a mass migration to towns such as Aitos and Burgas. When this migration started the village was settled by Bulgarian Turks from the Kamchia river valley. Nowadays 896 inhabitants live permanently in the village. The group of Vresovo's *kukeri* is one of the most popular in Bulgaria, jealously guarding their traditions and not changing the appearance of their masks and costumes over the decades.

Carnival in the village was last studied in 1948 when the ethnomusicologist Raina Katsarova and the artist Binka Vazova went there to record it. Two researchers had described the masquerade in Vresovo before that: Dimitar Marinov (Marinov, 1907) (Marinov, *Narodna viara i religiozni obichai*) and Michael Arnaudov (Arnaudov, 1948). Nowadays we know the mummers group from these descriptions and from their presentations at numerous festivals in the country. However we went to carry out research in the village itself, to trace the changes in masquerade today.

Here, as everywhere in the country, the ritual content has been forgotten and some new elements have appeared, but at the expense of reinforcing carnival-type trends.

The *kukeri* of Vresovo are known far beyond this village. They go around and play in many other places. In their bachelor years, Vresovo men take part as mummers several times and some of them still keep their mummers' swords. They believed that whoever had played a mummer for three years would not be chased by goblins. In the course of forty days, mothers burned incense for their sons who played the mummers, so that they would not turn into devils. Others who live in extreme poverty and could not prepare their own costumes, 'felt excluded and only ran after the mummers' (Truhchev, 2008).

In the past, people did the mummers procession on the second Sunday before Lent, and in 1948 on the first Sunday before Lent. Both were All Souls' days. Until the beginning of the communist period in 1944, *Kukerovden* ('The Day of the Kukeri') was the official village holiday. In 1948, after the above mentioned study, the procession was prohibited. On

[1] *Babugeri*, the name of the masked figures in Bansko.
[2] *Dracusi*, the name of the masked figures in the region of Smolian, the village of Petkovo. The name *bubratzi* is also popular there.
[3] *Pesiyatzi*, the name of the masked figures in Shiroka Luka, the region of Smolian.
[4] *Tchaushi*, the name of the masked figures in Razlog.

March 5, 1967, the village was again awakened by the sound of the mummers. Today, the procession takes place on the first Saturday of March.

Masks are called gugla (hoods) and are zoomorphic, and resemble the head of a bizarre animal with two horns, decorated with *papulyki* – colourful woollen pompons. The latter are sewn upon a piece of white cloth on which holes were made for the eyes and the mouth. The lower part of the cloth covers the chest. A mirror is placed on the forehead, and a moustache is made of horsehair. A beard resembling a he-goat's is stuck on and red fabric is stitched for a tongue over the beard. The cloth is sewn onto a piece of a bag, thus forming the hood. This piece of bag is sewn at the back to make a hump. Red kid's fur is put on the back of the hood and horsehair at the back of the head. The cap is extended upwards with two 'horns', upright sticks decorated with pompons, horsehair, necklaces, ribbons and lace.

Long ago the families of the mummers took on the task of making the masks and the main role was played by women who sewed the various items. Two of the veteran mummers made the masks of the group after the restoration of *Kukeri* day and since then those have been stored in the village house of culture. Today, there are no longer master mask-makers, which makes local people particularly attentive to their conservation and protection.

Nowadays, mummers are dressed in women's smocks; while in the first descriptions of Vresovo's *kukeri*, they were dressed in fur. At the back of the smock a ball of straw is sewn to form the hump. Once, instead of sleeves sewn to the smock, people wore a white and red woven apron. Today aprons are substituted by red and white cotton fabric. Usually the right arm is white and the left red. The number eight is embroidered on the sleeve. The legs are wrapped in goat fur leggings of a different colour, perhaps a remnant of the former suit of fur and leather. In their right hand, mummers have a sword – the *kalachka* – and in the left hand a crutch. On top of the crutch, they tie a broom, which they make wet in puddles and then lightly hit bystanders with it. A belt with bells is worn. Long ago, Vresovo *kukeri* wore two belts of bells, and they tied at least ten bells on each belt. In those days, the village sheep were among the best in the region. Nowadays, there are only a few of the old bells left and new ones can hardly be purchased because of the hard financial situation of the villagers.

The masks and costumes of the Vresovo *kukeri* are among the most conservative in the country. One can hardly detect changes in them over the last fifty years. The only difference is the use of more coloured pompons for the decoration of masks, something resulting from the use of new chemical dyes rather than the old natural dyes of traditional society.

In the past, there were great fights between spectators and mummers, as well as between the two neighbourhoods of the village. A large stone monument to the memory of mummers who were killed in battle is preserved in the village. Then the village was big and the two neighbourhoods made their masks separately. Today the group is small, it divides into two in order to walk around the two neighbourhoods and then it reunites in the village square. In the past, children were told frightening stories about *kukeri* who emerged from the village dunghill, with the aim of making the youngsters less mischievous. Nowadays, everybody is entertained by the masked men and joyfully await them. Even families with little children try to find costumes and masks for them, so to 'have them learn the ritual from an early age and not forget their roots'.

A 'bride' and an *arapin* (an Arab man) play together with the mummers. The bride was actually a lad dressed in female traditional costume, with a kerchief on his head and a distaff in his hand. The Arab was clothed in furs and wore female attire. He had a sooty face and a hump. He carried a weaver which he wields like a gun. A bell was attached to his bag. He was engaged in a game with the other mummers of capturing and losing custody of the bride.

Once mummers would dress up at night and hours before dawn the group would gather in a grove near the village. They would light a small fire, without speaking. 'All as silent as devils' they danced around the fire. And when the whole group gathered, they went to a meadow near the cemetery.

Nowadays, the group continues to meet near the graveyard, after which they go to the municipality and ask permission from the mayor to start the procession. After receiving permission, 'The Arab' joins them. A new *kuker* is selected at his house with a sort of ritual initiation for new members of the mummers' society. From that moment onwards 'The Arab' is the leading figure of the ritual.

The group starts visiting the houses, accompanied by a bagpiper playing the tune that mummers perform to. The masked men move by running and jumping. The *kukeri* do not walk in a normal way, but they proceed in a two-four rhythm which they call tepane or stomping dance. The origin is long forgotten, but is probably associated with the processes of grain growth, as the main livelihood for Vresovo people included agriculture, cattle-breeding and wood-cutting.

Upon entering the courtyard of the visited family, the bride puts a scarf on the shoulder of the host and then the hosts tied coins in it. Today, despite the striking poverty in the village (due to the high level of unemployment and lack of livelihood), every family is prepared for the arrival of masked men with drinks, some food and small coins as a gift for the group.

Going around the village, mummers perform their dances without holding hands but only touching their swords and crutches. Mummers jump their 'dance' and run about while the Arab stops them separating from the group and arranges them one behind the other in one or two rows. At times they perform in a straight line, forming a circle, or a row, which they define as 'a snake' ready to attack. Mummers also run about and chase spectators. In former times some of the villagers would try to steal the bride and hide her in a house well supplied with wine. Others let on where the bride was hidden and when she was found the mummers were treated with wine in this house.

Nowadays, as in the past, the entire group gathers in the square at around 1 pm. There the 'bride' turns into the leading one in the group. She takes little children from their mothers and holds them in her arms for good health and she is given gifts in response. Today, most gifts are small candies, not money. After dancing in the square mummers fetch the 'king' from his house. In the past they carried him on a cart, harnessed by mummers. Today he walks, surrounded by mummers. His face is sometimes blackened, sometimes powdered with flour. He has a large beard and moustache and is wrapped with a hooded cloak or *yamurluk*. He carries a gourd, in which chilli peppers are smouldering and he uses it as a pipe. Prior to the ritual ploughing and sowing, he utters a long blessing. In today's blessing of the 'king' the 'glorious Vresovo mummers' are praised and a blessing is pronounced for health and fertility. Blessings are interrupted by the jingling of bells by the mummers. After his appearance the 'king' becomes another main character in the show. He makes the mummers take a weaver, which is held by two masked men, and the others are supposed to roll over it; he sends the 'Arab' to bring the scattered mummers and he orders the 'bride' to honour him. The group organises itself spectacularly in a column where the masked men gradually lean forward one after another, each one putting his head on the back of his neighbour in the front. This is their time for a 'rest' until they get a signal from the Arab to stand up. They say that in this way they 'ensure the fertility of their land, and bent forward so that it would be laden with fruit'. The Arab and the bride often embrace each other and start jumping up high and landing heavily. The meaning of these actions is lost, but according to stories of old people in the village, this was done with 'fertility purposes', the same way as the jumping of masked men over a branch is. Possibly one can trace here a link with old sun cults.

Having completed the sowing of the land, the mummers throw their swords down and make a round dance holding their crutches which actually brings to an end the masquerade. Nowadays, as in the past, everybody observes whether the king has made a good blessing, whether it is a fertile year, and this is the basis for choosing the king. The masquerade is for men only. In the past, the group consisted of fifty to sixty mummers. Today the group has twenty or thirty masked men. Until the 1940s, only the Arab, the bride and

the king could be married men. Today this rule for marital status is not observed, but maybe this is the only group in which only men perform. When the group travels for festivals, women accompany them – they wear the emblem of the village and dance and play around the masked men –. One of the veterans in the group is Ahmed – a Muslim who says that he joins in this custom with great joy, and despite the resistance of his family – does not miss the opportunity to put a mask on his face and perform. For the people of Vresovo this is an opportunity to show their own importance and thus they proudly display certificates and plaques collected from festivals and fairs of folk art in the village house of culture. A local researcher and former local investigator of history for various newspapers, Valko Truhchev, continues to travel everywhere with the mummers' group, carrying around newspaper clippings of stories about the group. He enjoys talking about the 'glorious Vresovo kukeri, how he has never put a mask on his face, but that the magic of the masquerade has lead him everywhere with the group and has obliged him to follow the tradition.

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The National Ethnographic Museum

Sofia
Bulgaria
http://ethnography.cc.bas.bg

The National Ethnographic Museum at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences is one of the oldest cultural institutions in Bulgaria. It was founded in 1892 in Sofia as a division of the then National Museum for the purpose of collecting, preserving and exhibiting Bulgarian folk costumes, handcrafted objects and traditional musical instruments from all parts of the country.

The National Ethnographic Museum today holds a rich collection of ethnographic materials representing a stunning variety of artefacts and products of Bulgarian traditional culture, handicrafts and folk art. The holdings number over 50,000, revealing the regional specificity and diversity of all cultural areas within the Bulgarian ethnic zone, some of which are outside the political borders of today's Bulgaria.

Iglika Mishkova

Iglika Mishkova is leader of the Bulgarian team working on the CKE project. She is a curator at The National Ethnographic Museum; author of numerous articles on Bulgarian masquerade rituals and has curated several exhibitions depicting the masks themselves.

Team members for fieldwork in Bulgaria during the CKE project: Assoc. Prof. Svetla Rakshieva, Dimitar Vasilev and Rumiana Danova.

The Bear - mask
Buhalniţa (Iaşi)

The Goat from Cepleniţa village, Iaşi County, Romania

Simona Ghiorghies

Introduction

Masquerade games that take place in the New Year period are archaic customs with origins in ancient agrarian and pastoral rituals of the Neolithic and Thracian-Getic eras, customs that evolved and developed simultaneously with funerary rites and ancestor cults.

Agrarian customs appeared with the process of land cultivation and were practiced with the intention of taming and invoking benevolent spirits to aid land fertility and human fecundity. Agrarian civilizations elaborated a cosmic religion where religious activity was concentrated around a central mystery: the periodic renewal of the world.

The Dacians and Getae forged a sum of customs, traditions and rituals focused on a sun cult that renewed nature in the beginning of their millennial civilization. These were celebrated all year long, but especially in the spring and in the beginning of winter, on New Year's Eve.

In processions of goats, deer, rams, bulls, ostriches, horses and bears, with bells, flutes and drums the masqueraders weave through the villages on New Year's Eve and New Year's Day, reminding us of Bacchanalian and Dionysian celebrations from Graeco-Roman Antiquity when the ancient holidays were related to fertility cults.

Images of the New Year masks, the goat, bear and bull were found for the first time on an ornamental ceramic plaque from the 16th century discovered in Iasi in 1961. Masquerade rites are described in many variants in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Preparations for these traditional masked games start at the beginning of the Christmas period when young people hire musicians to sing on the winter holidays and on the night of St Andrew[1] when the traditional 'garlic guarding' takes place. So as to banish ghosts windows are anointed with garlic and the village young gather at the dancehall and declare that they are going to 'guard the garlic'.

The same young people who guarded garlic on the night of St. Andrew process with the goat on New Year's Eve. They group together in bands of 15-30 males and participate in these traditional games by forming goat processions, the goat being the central figure in New Year masked carnival ceremonies.

The Goat procession constitutes the principal component of the masked carnival of the New Year, along with the bear and the horse. As variants of the original *turca* or *brezaia*, the masked personae of goats, deer, rams, bulls and ostriches have a similar significance. The similarity is seen in the 'chattering' jaws that are a consistent element in these masks. And if the masks of goat, deer, bull, ostrich represent different animals, the procession unites them all, as does the music executed with flute and drum that always accompanies these spectacles.

Death and revival are the predominant ideas of the New Year masquerade, the climax being the death of the magical animal that is then revived. At that precise moment, the whole procession moves in the same rhythm around the animal persona.

[1] The 30th of November.

The Old man - mask,
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)

The Old woman - mask,
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)

The Goat of Cepleniţa village, Iaşi County, Romania

For the CKE II ASTRA exhibition the National Museum Complex choose to display 'The Goat Dance' from the village of Cepleniţa in Iaşi county represented by 5 different masks.

- ***The Goat***: the head is made from wood, with a moving clacking jaw covered with goat fur. The ears are made from leather and it has animal horns. Behind the horns there is a triangular decoration embellished with mirrors, beads and with artificial flowers around the edges. On each side of the triangle are two red pompons with bright ribbons. Behind all this decoration is a fir crown. The head is fixed on a stick. In order to imitate the four footed posture of the animal the goat masquerader leans on this stick. The body of the goat is made from a traditional woven carpet heavily decorated with headdresses, mirrors and ribbons.
- ***The Old man***: the mask covering the face is made from cloth, wool and fur. The hat is also made from fur. The character wears a shirt, trousers and a girdle. On his feet he has woollen socks and boots.
- ***The Old woman***: the mask covering the face is made from cloth, wool and fur. The character wears a winter coat and a skirt and is shod with wool knitted socks and boots.
- ***Death***: the mask that covers the face is made from cardboard and has eyebrows and hair made from fur. On top there is a headdress. A scary mouth, with big, real animal teeth pokes out. Death's body is covered by a long black robe and he holds a scythe.
- ***The Devil***: wears a mask made from sheepskin and fur with natural horns. The mouth is sewn with red wool and has sheep's teeth. On the top of the mask there are ears and hair made from black sheep wool. The costume of this masquerader is made from dark cloth with strips of fur in various places.

'The Goat Dance' from the village of Buhalniţa in Iaşi county is represented by 2 different masks.

- ***The Bear***: the mask is made from leather and fur glued onto cardboard. It has sheep's teeth and fangs made from cockspur hawthorn. The mask imitates the head of a bear and it is decorated with mirrors, beads, ribbons, pompons and metallic buttons. The body itself is made from ears of reeds.
- ***The Bear-tamer*** / ***Gipsy***: the mask is made from cloth and the bark of the cherry tree. The face has a nose, a mouth and eyes made from fabric and a moustache, beard, eyebrows and hair of fur. On top of the head he wears a crown of goose feathers. The body itself is covered by a coat and trousers on which are sewed strips of fur in various places. The character has a chain full of bells and tin cans around his waist.

Alongside the masks of the deer, the bull and the bear, the mask of the goat belongs to the masquerade category of zoomorphic costumes. In the mythological beliefs of the people of South-Eastern Europe, the goat was conceived as a demonic personification of fertility. Aphrodite was envisioned riding a white goat, symbol of marriage protection, Hera received a sacrifice of a black goat and Dionysus metamorphosed into a goat.

Christian mythology reshaped the goat's profile and it was transformed from a creature that promoted fecundity and fertility into an evil animal that embodies immorality, black magic and evil, a tool of the Devil. But in the Romanian traditions the old cult of the goat still emerges in folk-beliefs and rituals. For example goat's milk and meat are considered to possess miraculous medical effects, the goat is given as a present to a young bride and its masquerade brings good luck on New Year's Eve.

The goat,
Cepleniţa
(Iaşi)

Over time the zoomorphic aspect of the Goat mask underwent changes that led to a new and stylized artefact.
A spectacular moment in the Goat masquerade is the picturesque vision of the Bear and the Gipsy. The Bear masks in Romania can be subdivided as follows:

1. costumes made from unprocessed bearskins for the player;
2. those made from the skin of other animals imitating bearskin;
3. those made from braided straw ropes sewn together;
4. those made from reed straws.

The bear performance has different phases: the call of the Bear, climbing on a pole, the beating of the Bear, the resurrection and finally the dance of the Bear. Initially the bear performance was free-form, with the bear acting by its own as a leading character, but this initial version was replaced by the trained bear in which the symbol of the bear is dominated by the Bear-tamer, the Gipsy.
The rest of the characters from the Goat procession are anthropomorphic masked figures. The Goat masquerade as a whole is constituted from masks, costumes and dances. The Goat is accompanied by flute and drum music and the chattering of its jaws.
The masks have been used over time to disguise and to mock. In the contemporary period the masquerade is again active, but now the players focus on the decorative character of their masks. The mask acts as a catharsis, displaying baser tendencies that have to be banished. The force captured by the mask does not identify with it, or with the man that handles it, the mask being a simple appearance of the creature represented. The ciphered idiom of the mask is spread universally with the code of meanings always and everywhere entirely the same.

The Death - mask,
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)

The Bear tamer (the Gypsy) - mask,
Buhalniţa (Iaşi)

The Devil - mask,
Cepleniţa (Iaşi)

Complexul Naţional Muzeal 'ASTRA'
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'ASTRA' is a group of museums created in 2001, having as its core one of the largest open air museums in Europe, *skansen*, (about 96 ha and 236 homesteads and workshops) that traces its origins back to 1963.

The current Sibiu Museums complex is made up of four units: the ASTRA Museum of Traditional Folk Civilization – the open-air museum – the Museum of Transylvanian Civilization, the Franz Binder Museum of Universal Ethnography, the Emil Sigerus Museum of Saxon Ethnography and Folk Art and includes a projected museum: The Museum of the Culture and Civilization of the Romani (Gypsies).

Important supporting departments include: conservation and restoration laboratories, the ASTRA Museum publishing house, marketing and public relations office and ASTRA Film, a centre for documentary film and visual anthropology that organizes a well-known international film festival (the ASTRA Film Fest).

ASTRA owns about 100,000 cultural artefacts divided into specific collections, according to region/country and/or ethnic group/nation: icons, masks and religious objects; ceramics, folk costumes (also dolls in folk costume), embroidery; wood, bone and iron objects, and also old documents, photographs and anthropological films.

Besides its impressive collections illustrating the tangible cultural heritage the ASTRA Museum undertakes a broad programme called 'Living Human Treasures' whose main goal is to hand down authentic cultural traditions to the young generation.

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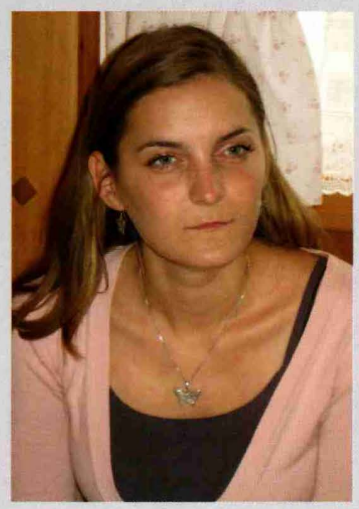
Simona Ghiorghieş

Simona Anişoara Ghiorghieş trained in History, Archaeology and Anthropology, has worked in various types of teams for ethnographical field research or for organizing national or international cultural events, and is now Curator of Folk Art Galleries (Wood, Textiles, Costumes from Transylvania) at the Complexul Naţional Muzeal 'ASTRA' Sibiu / 'ASTRA' National Museum Complex. She is in charge of studying the immaterial patrimony, taking active part in the Programme 'Living Human Treasures' aiming at the safeguarding and handing down of the immaterial patrimony of the old traditional crafts. Within the project, she is organizer of the 'The Craftsmen Fair from Romania' and of the 'The Toys Fair', annual events that gather hundreds of craftmen from all over Romania.



Execution of Death,
Jedlińsk

Carnival King of Poland

Justyna Laskowska-Otwinowska, Patryk Pawlaczyk, Klara Sielicka-Baryłka, Amudena Rutkowska, Aleksander Robotycki, Grzegorz Rostkowski

Introduction

As a part of activities within the 'Carnival King of Europe' project, the second edition of which was joined by the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw, a total of 10 trips was completed. In Poland, the places visited were: Sopotnia Mała, Radomyśl nad Sanem, Inowrocław, Żywiec and Jedlińsk. One of the trips (November 2010, Italy) was devoted to the meeting of CKE II partners and a conference, and two additional research expeditions (7.1.2011 to Zielonki near Cracow – recording of the so-called 'Herody' carolling group; 6-7.1.2011 to Sopotnia Mała – recording of the 'Sopotnia Three Kings' custom) were focused on slightly different customs than *Shrovetide* rituals, i.e. winter rituals, still existing in Poland and often using similar artefacts to the carnival ones (masks, wassailing, etc.). In addition, two foreign research trips were completed: to Romania and Macedonia.

Involvement in the fieldwork (with the participation of Museum camera operator and volunteers) included participant observation as well as interviews and film and photographic documentation. The search for carnival rituals in Poland has shown us a true picture of Europe – its identity, which has its sources in the community experience of the Carnival and the unity of its elements. Masks, hierarchy within a costumed group, choice of costumes, types of hats and other accessories, types of calls and procession scenarios or house wassailing – all these we indeed find, somehow different but at the same time similar in structure, methods of implementation and the reasons for which people follow the tradition. And these similarities can be seen both in the Macedonian village of Rogachevo and in Polish Inowrocław.

Justyna Laskowska-Otwinowska

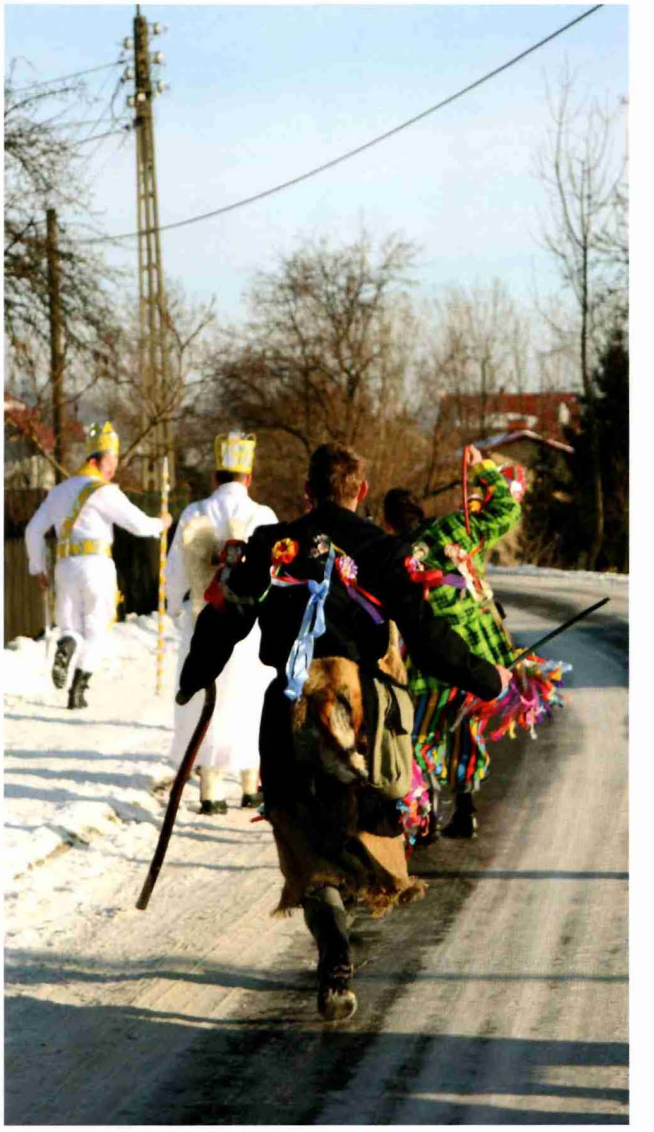
The *Jukace*, Żywiec – Zabłocie, 31st December 2010 – 1st January 2011

Dziady żywieckie ('The Żywiec beggars'), also called *Jukace* or *Jukoce*, is a folk custom celebrated in the Żywiec region (southern Poland). The afore-mentioned custom is limited territorially to the town of Żywiec, its district Zabłocie and some villages located south-west of Żywiec. It is believed that the tradition of this New Year's Eve/New Year beggar group goes back to the 17th century. The ritual begins on the evening of New Year's Eve and ends on New Year's Day in the afternoon. *Jukace* are a group of disguised bachelors of different ages, including older men who have never been married, so-called *starzy kawalerowie* ('old bachelors'). Leading the group is *Kasjer* ('a cashier') with *Pogaiacze* ('the herdsmen') as his subordinates, then *Dziady* ('the Beggars'), *Kominiarz* ('a chimney-sweep'), *Diabeł* ('a Devil') and *Baba* ('a Beggar-woman'). Traditionally, just before midnight, *Jukace* gather at a railway station where *Kasjer* distributes tickets, divides performers into groups and assigns tasks to them. From here, *Jukace* disperse to 'run' to New Year's Eve parties. During the ritual they sing carols, wish Happy New Year and play tricks on passers-by. Since the 1930's at night *Jukace* have been allowed to cross a bridge over the River Soła which marked one of the Zabłocie and Żywiec boundaries in the past to wish the best of luck to people celebrating in Żywiec as well. In return for the wassailing they sometimes used to be given a holiday cake, a drink of vodka, or, most often, a small amount of money which was appropriated to organise a beggar party. Early in the morning, at 5 o'clock on New Year's Day, the *Zabłockie Dziady* ('Zabłocie Beggars') gather for a Mass conducted at St. Florian's Church. The disguised bachelor group is joined by costumed boys who, 'apply' to join the bachelor circle and also begin to go carolling. Small boys are often accompanied to the meeting place by parents,

The Jukace, *Żywiec*

The Jukace, *Żywiec*

The Epiphany, Sopotnia Mała



The Epiphany, Sopotnia Mała

who secretly supply their sons with sandwiches and vacuum flasks with hot beverages. The morning of New Year's Eve is often very cold in Żywiec both the kids and the brave researchers from the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw were themselves afflicted by it. The parents' participation in the admission of boys to the beggar group is an outward sign showing that the tradition is still alive among Zabłocie inhabitants and the entering of a child to the bachelor group bears traits of an initiation. Besides, the group itself is organized in an extremely restrictive manner, following the example of a military organisation, although it uses a code of honour which is passed on by oral tradition only.
At noon, *Jukace* gather next to the bridge and then they go half-way onto it cracking whips. Originally, this custom was probably used to drive the Old Year away by magic. Nowadays, this is rather an attractive show which appeals to the audience.

Patryk Pawlaczyk

The Epiphany, Sopotnia Mała, Beskid Żywiecki, 6th-7th January 2011

The celebration of the holiday starts early in the morning, with the morning mass. After that, the group – accompanied by musicians – starts walking around the houses of Sopotnia. The main characters are the *Three Wise Men* and their entourage – the *Angel* and the trickster characters – and the *Jews*. The celebration features elements of carolling and folk theatre, combining its contents with the custom of 'Herods'. People playing the Magi come from the local community. They are usually bachelors. Within the group, there is a hierarchy and a division of roles. The *Angel* heralds the arrival of the procession at the household. The *Black Wise Man* is always the least experienced, followed by the *Yellow Wise Man*. The most important one is the *Red Wise Man*, who turns into Herod during the rite. After performing a scene from *Herods*, the Angel dances with the housewife. If an unmarried girl lives in the house, *the Wise Men* dance around her and bestow their blessings upon her. The group's visit finishes with a snack, a drink, and a donation. The figures of tricksters – the *Jew* and *Augustus* – are really interesting. Both of them, are the only ones from the group not allowed into the church. They spend the whole ceremony standing outside the fence. The inhabitants of Sopotnia refer to the couple as *the Jews*. Their attributes include: tall hats with masks made of sheepskin, rags, walking sticks, hides of wild animals and rubber rods, *veins*. A few years ago, the ceremonial costumes were made from hedgehog skins. They used to give people painful pokes in the ribs while dancing. The *veins* are used to keep order within the group and to deliver hearty blows to onlookers ('for good luck'). Costumes from the Żywiec area bear a striking resemblance to ceremonial attire from Macedonia and other parts of Europe included in our research. An important part of the ceremonial behaviour involving the *Jews* entails creating a commotion, disturbing daily order, and symbolic sexual violence. (In the meaning of M. Bloch's concept, where 'conquest' is the superior part of the rite). It is directed at unmarried young women. Acting out sexual intercourse often takes place with the acceptance of the rest of the household. Sometimes the mother defended the girl, abruptly stopping the 'intercourse'. This part of the rite reveals its true nature. The individual is stripped of their vitality, in order to recoverit in superior form from external beings, in this case, human-animal creatures excluded from the human community (animal hides, woollen masks). The tradition of celebrating Epiphany was suspended during the war. Currently it is encouraged by Koło Gospodyń Wiejskich, the Farmer's Wives' Association, especially by Maria Jafernik, the leader of the 'Romanka' folk group.

Patryk Pawlaczyk

Shrovetide, Sopotnia Mała, 4th-6th March 2011

It used to be that *niesopustniks*, or revellers, went around from the last carnival Sunday to the following Tuesday evening. Today they can be seen only on the Tuesday, before Ash Wednesday and only in the afternoon. In the last few years the end of carnival has been transformed into a folkloric show which is a compilation of several Shrovetide traditions. They are acted out by members of the 'Romanka' folk group, whose choreographer makes sure that the dances are 'traditionally accurate'. Among the elements essential for referencing the historic folk culture, one can also find regional attire worn by all of the performers. The men take it off immediately after they finish performing. The performance takes place in Sopotnia, in Dom Strażaka (Fireman's House), which is an important meeting place for the local community.

The meeting starts with the rite of *Niesopusty*, known in the nearby villages as *Mięsopusty*. This custom is tightly connected to Shrovetide and was popular across the Żywiec region. Currently it can be seen only during a stage performance in Sopotnia Mała.

In the *Niesopustniks* group the most important characters are: the horse, the devils, Death and two boys dressed up as women (pilgrims) and also musicians. *Niesopustniks* run through the village cracking their whips, visiting all the houses in turn, where the hosts offer them vodka. Women from all the local wives' associations meet and together dance the *bon* dance so that the *kwacki* (a kind of swede) will grow well. This dance used to be danced by married women in Sopotnia Mała. A day before Ash Wednesday, a group of women met at widows' houses to dance and sing. Such meetings were organised by the young married women whose weddings took place during the carnival before the Shrovetide. They would invite mature women for a boozy supper and thus they would be accepted among the experienced housewives. Older sources emphasise that on the night before Ash Wednesday young people enjoyed the festivities until the church bells sounded at midnight. A new day was starting, the first of the 40 days of Lent.

After the stage performance finished and the parish priest left the Fireman's House, the dancing started and alcohol appeared on the tables. During the 2011 Shrovetide, the festivities lasted until 4am.

Klara Sielicka-Baryłka

The Goat of Szymborze, Inowrocław – Szymborze, 7th-8th March 2011

In 1932 Szymborze was absorbed by the town of Inowroclaw and despite the passage of years has not merged with Inowrocław. It still consists only of single-family houses and many people are still farmers so rural traditions are still quite strong. An association called the Club of Bachelors of Szymborze was created at the end of 1833. Since then, almost without interruption it has continued its activities (it was suspended only during the Second World War). The Association aims to support the old customs of the Kujawy region, which include: *przywolywka* at Easter (rhymed poems about local girls) and *dyngus* (water pouring on the second day of Easter) and the closing ceremony of the carnival ('The Goat'). The Club (headed by Mr. Pawel Malachowski), in accordance with its statutes may include bachelors who are at least twenty-one years old, have a good reputation and are generally liked. Membership of the club is often a family tradition handed down from father to son. The Goat has been celebrated for over 160 years. On the last day of

Shrovetide, Sopotnia Mała

The Goat of Szymborze

carnival processions with people wearing the costumes of a goat and *koziarek* (goat-man), a beggar woman, a devil, storks, bears, a young couple, a Gypsy or a Jew, a chimney sweep and musicians arrive at the Town Hall with the Mayor and then, dancing and singing, they pass through the streets of Inowrocław, visit schools, institutions and homes, the nearby village of Miechowice and collect 'donations for the hay' for the goats. The day before there is the 'carrying out the goats' around the city. The bear costume is particularly noteworthy, it predates the war, and every year it is supplemented with specially prepared straw (threshed rye flail, scythe sheared). A regional museum wanted to take the costume, but the group members did not agree. The group is slightly different each year and the members are specially selected. On the route of the 'Goat' old former members of the group can be met, who, often with their eyes full of tears, reminiscence how they themselves, their fathers or grandfathers played the role of the Bride, the Jew or *Koziarek* in their youth. During the field research in 2011 ethnographers managed to talk to an older citizen of Szymborze, who used to make the masks for the group and with people responsible for the maintenance of the straw bear (they described, for example, how to make straw braids).
For the local community the annual 'Goat' is an important event full of strong emotions. The group members took days off work, military, student or even doctor's leave so they could 'run with the goat' on Shrove Tuesday. 'It's right here, in my heart', could be heard during Shrovetide 2011.

Amudena Rutkowska

Execution of Death, Jedlińsk, 8th March 2011

The celebrations in Jedlińsk are amongst the most theatrical forms of carnival in Poland. 'The Beheading of Death' is a show which always gathers a large audience in the market square while having a permanent staff recruited from only amongst Jedlińsk's inhabitants. Being an actor is a responsibility passed from father to son, and a role, after going through the successive stages in the hierarchy, is taken on almost for life. The youngest performers are little children playing devils. They are accompanied by slightly older newly-weds, a bear, Jews, a Gypsy couple, a Cossack, a policeman, a fisherman, and so-called *gawiedź* ('a mob'), mostly boys dressed as rural women. They all set off early in the morning to conquer Jedlińsk. They stop all the people they meet, whether they are walking on foot, hiding in passing cars or simply occupied with their daily work, for it is a holiday when the normal pace of life doesn't stop: work during the day, fun in the evening. Offices operate as usual and shops and schools are eagerly visited by pageants of costumed people, whose purpose is to cadge a symbolic tribute.
Additionally, there are stalls with sweets and toys, and booths with appetizers to eat with various types of alcohol. These are preparations meant for something much more important, something which Jedlińsk waits for the whole year, the Judgement of Death. At 3 p.m. exactly, town councillors – lay judges – come to consult together over the fate of the accused who stands in front of them. She (in Poland, Death is traditionally represented as a woman – translator's note) is put in irons and chains and is accompanied by guards, devils and the police. The members of the jury, dressed in seventeenth century costumes, open the trial (in the morning they were officially given the town

The bear,
The Goat of Szymborze

Execution of Death,
Jedlińsk

keys by the mayor). Death's fate is always the same. She is sentenced to be beheaded with a sword. After the execution, the corpse is taken in a wagon or sleigh to the priest, who has to agree to bury her in the local cemetery. This role is played by an actual parish priest from Jedlińsk. Over the years, the ritual has undergone some minor changes, especially in terms of clothing, some less important characters and scenography (now this is done on a professional stage with sound equipment). But it always follows the same basic scenario, accompanied for many years with a poem created by a nineteenth century parish-priest on the basis of the performance he had seen.

There are ongoing disputes over the authenticity of the words contained in the poem. It is undetermined how much of the text was created by the author's imagination and to what extent it is an almost ethnographic record. The fact is that the ritual itself is much older than the published version of the versified drama. It goes back as far as the seventeenth century, when epidemics of plague and cholera haunting the town could be the origins of the performance. The show had a protective function. It is unlikely to be older - in Jedlińsk, there was an Arian school and Arianism dominated other beliefs, and in accordance with Protestant doctrine, carnival pleasures in whatever form were banned. However, Arians contributed to Jedlińsk's taste for theatre. And somewhere between these two phenomena, one can suspect the beginning of the tradition. It should not be attributed to agrarian magic, e.g. rituals performed to drive winter away or similar functions. This show was established on an urban basis and only today, during *zapustny wtorek* (Shrove Tuesday), can some additions inspired by Polish rituals characteristic of rural carnival be observed. However this is in the way of creating a new tradition.

Aleksander Robotycki

Silent Parade, Radomyśl on the River San, 8th March 2011

The history of the Radomyśl carnival dates back to the interwar period. Then, the formula of a parade – a procession with a newly-married couple – was instituted. After World War II, Radomyśl's inhabitants could not immediately return to cultivating their 'young' tradition. It was only during 'the thaw' after Stalin's death that they began to celebrate *Zapusty* ('Shrovetide') again. Initially, costumed people used to paint their faces with soot; with time they began to produce simple textile masks. Today, apart from the old, preserved props, people also use ready-made masks (which can be purchased in stores) of film and comic book heroes. However, that does not mean that they have ceased to make costumes themselves. Individual inventiveness is demonstrated even in the latest acquisition of the museum – a camel: a costume for two people made from blankets and a chair.

Radomyśl *Zapustnicy* (people taking part in the carnival) form a wedding procession accompanying the 'newly-weds' in the first steps of their 'new life', life after the change of social status. Such a boundary is very typical for carnival-end. Number, age and sex of participants within the group is not relevant for the course of the ritual. During the walk around the town, we can see people dressed up in costumes in the town hall just after the wedding and the young couple going to a bank to open an account, to a doctor who has to examine the 'purity' of the bride, to a post office and other town offices in the town (nodes). The parade ends at the presbytery where a priest tries to identify real identities of each costumed person (playful character). In order not to betray their identities earlier, the participants of the parade dress themselves up in 92 year-old Mrs. Gizela Krajewska's house, where they have been putting on their bi-

zarre costumes for years. Moreover, to avoid intrusive eyes, they sneak there thorough forest, throwing others off the trail by giving confusing clues. For the same reason, they stay silent during the procession, and the costumes cover almost every part of their bodies that might indicate who they are – the only person who can recognise them is the priest. After the visit to the priest, connected with a treat, they again put on masks and return to the place where they set off from. There, they throw off disguise and return to a normal life by paths known only to them.

Państwowe
Muzeum Etnograficzne
w Warszawie

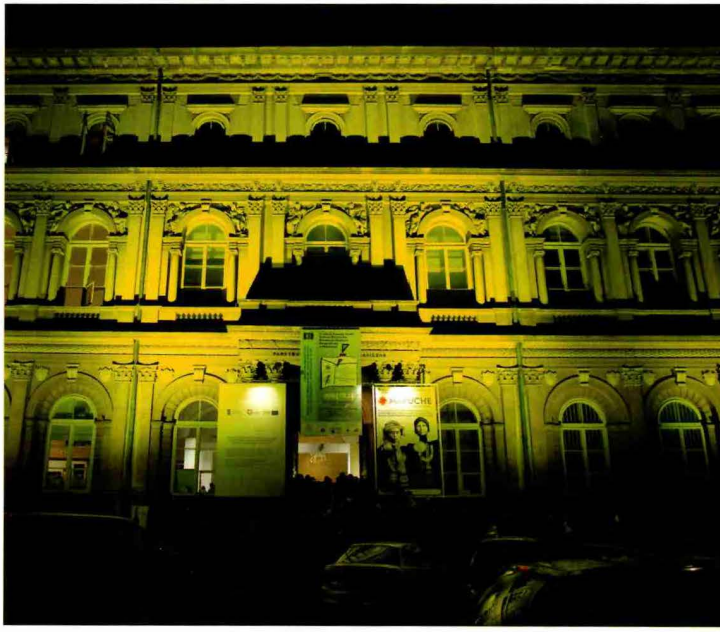
Grzegorz Rostkowski

Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne w Warszawie
The State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw

Warsaw
Poland
www.ethnomuseum.pl

The genesis of the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw occurred with the foundation of the Ethnographic Museum which took place in 1888 in Warsaw. Therefore our Museum is the oldest in Poland and actually one of the biggest ethnographic museums in Europe. The history of the Museum is complicated, dramatic even, as is the history of Poland itself. At the beginning of World War Two in September 1939 the Museum's building was bombed and by 1945 the prewar collections had been wholly destroyed. In spite of this the Museum was re-established in 1946 and since then the Museum has been rebuilt and dynamic development, albeit not without certain difficulties, has taken place.

Nowadays the Museum's own collections include ca. 80,000 exhibits. Among them there are almost 55,000 artefacts originating from Poland and Europe, the rest being non-European. Besides this the Museum has his own scientific archives, with ca. 195,000 items of archival material and a library with almost 27,000 volumes. The Museum's activities include, amongst others, collecting objects within the scope of Polish and universal ethnography and their scientific description as well as research on several aspects of ethnography, ethnology and anthropology. Our Museum cooperates with many Polish and foreign cultural and scientific institutions. At present, the Museum is modernizing its building and infrastructure and, at the same time, actively participating in the cultural and scientific life of Warsaw, Poland and other countries.

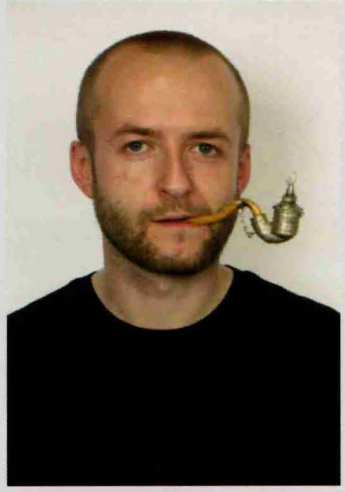


Justyna Laskowska-Otwinowska

An ethnographer, Ph.D. in social science, head of the Department of Polish and European Ethnography of the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw and coordinator of the Polish team in the 'Carnival King of Europe' project. She is a lecturer in sociology at Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, Warsaw.

Patryk Pawlaczyk

A graduate of the Nicolaus Copernicus University in Toruń (Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology). He currently works at the Department of Polish and European Ethnography of the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw. He is interested in issues concerning traditional costume and fabrics, the contemporary reception of folk art and transcultural aesthetics.

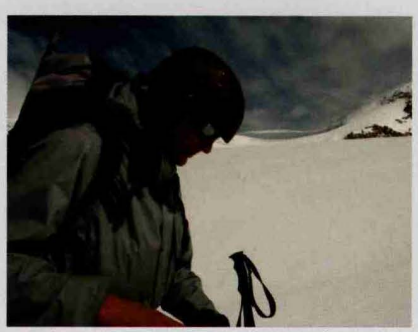


Klara Sielicka-Baryłka

Graduated from the University of Warsaw (Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology). Currently an assistant at the Department of Polish and European Ethnography of the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw (specializing in folklore and ritual). Activities - anthropological fieldwork (e.g. in Poland, Estonia, Germany), preparing exhibitions and the Museum's new projects, such as the planned Children's Museum and EU international cultural programs. She is head of the editorial board of the periodical *The New Ethnography* (*Etnografia Nowa*). She is a co-founder and Committee Member of the Pro Estonia Association, promoting Estonian culture in Poland. She has worked for Polish Humanitarian Action (PAH), in its Refugees Department. She has published poetry, prose and academic articles. She also used to run her own art gallery in Warsaw.

Amudena Rutkowska

Born in 1976, is a graduate of the University of Warsaw (Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology) and the School of Human Rights of the Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights in Poland. She has co-operated with non-governmental organizations dealing with ethnic and national minorities' rights and refugees' situation in Poland. For several years she was responsible for a part of the EU 'Youth' educational program, supporting young people's initiatives in their local communities, focusing on rural areas. She currently works at the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw, in the Department of Polish and European Ethnography, dealing with folk and non-professional art and researching urban folklore.



Aleksander (Bratek) Robotycki

Born in 1980, is an ethnologist and cultural anthropologist. He graduated from the Jagiellonian University in Kraków (Institute of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology) and received the *Certificat d'Études Politiques from the L'Institut d'Études Politiques* in Lyon (IEP). He is interested in issues in contemporary culture, from sport and urban anthropology to a reflection on the condition of the humanities today. This last is an essential thread of his doctorate which is in preparation. From more than a year he has been working at the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw (Department of Polish and European Ethnography).

Grzegorz Rostkowski

A historian of the mediaeval period. Currently his area of study includes, primarily, aspects of the history and culture of Byzantium and Rus (X-XII cen.). He graduated from the University of Warsaw (Faculty of History) and was then a doctoral student at the Institute of History of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw. Since 2002 he has been a secretary of the Polish part of the Polish-Bulgarian Historical Commission. He has published several articles on various problems connected with early Mediaeval history and culture and participated, presenting papers, in several international academic conferences in Poland and abroad. He is currently busy completing his Ph.D. dissertation. Currently working at the State Ethnographic Museum in Warsaw (*Państwowe Muzeum Etnograficzne w Warszawie*).

Translation by Katarzyna Skoczyńska, Jan Sielicki, Grzegorz Rostkowski

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